

How can I prepare to leave hospital?

It can also be helpful to use the below points when speaking with your stroke team about leaving hospital. This can help to make sure all your questions are answered, and you feel prepared to leave.

Equipment and essentials

- **comfortable clothes** to wear
- **keys**, if you are going home
- **enough money** for short-term needs
- **food in the house** (if you are going home), including anything you might need for a modified diet, if you have swallowing problems. See stroke.org.uk/stroke/effects/physical/swallowing-problems for information and tips.
- **flat sheets**, if needed, for safety, comfort and mobility
- **several duvets**
- **extra pillows** to support affected limbs both in bed and while in a chair
- **slide sheets**, if required. Hospital staff use these for stroke survivors who need repositioning in a bed or on a chair. They are patient-specific and are usually discarded on discharge, but you can request to take these home.
- **a supply of incontinence products**, if you need them, including:
 - disposable bed pads to protect sheets and reduce the need to change them frequently
 - disposable washcloths for cleaning the skin
- **aphasia communication cards** that your speech and language therapist has developed specific to your/your family's/carer's needs to support communication. You can also [order our communication support pack](#), which includes communication cards.

- **barrier creams** to make sure your skin stays healthy if you have reduced mobility or are incontinent. Speak to your GP or stroke team for advice as they may be able to prescribe these.

Visit stroke.org.uk/stroke/life-after/equipment-independent-living for more information on equipment, including stairlifts, grab rails and other bathroom aids, and how you will be assessed for this and get the equipment ready for returning home.

Medication

You should be given a supply of medication. You (and anyone supporting you, like a relative or carer) should understand any new medication you've been given, including how and when to take it. If you need medicines, you will usually be given enough for seven days.

If you need to keep taking your medication, you will need to get a repeat prescription from your GP before your hospital supply runs out. Be aware that it can take **up to 48 hours** for your prescription to be ready to collect after ordering it from your GP surgery.

If you find it difficult to remember when to take your medicines, you can buy and use pill organisers. These are plastic boxes with compartments for different days and times of the day.

A pharmacist may be able to organise your medicines using one of these plastic boxes or a calendar blister pack, which has the day and time the medicine should be taken printed on the pack. However, these aren't suitable for all medications and there could be a charge for this.

Other things to check

- If you are going home, will the heating be on (if needed)?

- Will there be someone to greet you, if you're going home? It may be helpful to ask a friend or relative to stay with you or visit regularly.