

SpeakUp:™ Right ID, Right Care

The goal of Speak Up™ is to help patients and their advocates become active in their care.

When you are a patient, you get asked a lot of questions.

What is your name?



What is your birth date?



There are good reasons for this. Your doctors and nurses are making sure you get the correct medicines, tests and treatment. Checking your identification using two different pieces of information is the best way to do this.

What does “two patient identifiers” mean?

Caregivers use two patient identifiers to make sure the right patient gets the right care in the right place at the right time.



What can happen if they aren't used?

A patient can be given the wrong medicine or the wrong type of blood. Some people even have surgery that was meant for another patient. Some of these mistakes can be deadly.



Why all the questions?

There may be hundreds of patients receiving care at the same time. Another patient may have a name like yours. Or, he or she is getting the same medicine or treatment that you're getting. Or, maybe another patient looks like you or has the same diagnosis.

Examples of patient identifiers:

- Name
- Birth date
- Phone number
- Medical record number (you may not know this number)
- Barcode
- Fingerprint

Caregivers should not use:

- Room or bed numbers, as those often change
- Home addresses (can be used for patients receiving care in their home)

Are there any exceptions to using two identifiers?

Some patients only need to be identified using two identifiers the first time they receive care. This is because these patients are well known to their caregivers. These patients are receiving care in nursing homes, behavioral health facilities, or in their home.

What can you do?

- Ask a family member or friend to act as your “patient advocate.”
- If you are given a wristband, check it. Is the information on it correct?
- If you have blood taken, see if the container is labelled before the caregiver leaves the room.
- If something doesn't look or sound right, say something.

Speak up!

