

Medical Lingo



Treatment in a hospital can be overwhelming. As you cope with the stress of a medical diagnosis and treatment, the hospital presents a new environment with its' own language. The following medical terms may assist you, as you will come in contact with many medical professionals during your stay:

CAN - Certified Nurse Assistant - provide bathing, feeding, grooming and transferring of patients.

LPN - Licensed Practical Nurse - provides medication (except IV's) and medical care.

RN - Registered Nurse - Supervises CNA and LPN. Responsible for assessing the patient and the primary caregiver for the patient. Provides medical care, medications, draws blood for labs and the contact between patient and physician.

Charge Nurse/Unit Director - RN that is in charge of the floor. Oversees the staff, and makes sure that the patient's needs are being met. If you or your family has any questions concerning your care, you should speak with the charge nurse.

P.T. - Physical Therapist - Responsible for your rehabilitation-strengthening exercises. Focus on sitting/standing balance and transferring.

PTA - Physical Therapy Assistant - Follow the PT's plan of care.

O.T. - Occupational Therapist - Responsible for your rehabilitation-focuses on activities of daily living, upper extremities, grooming, dressing, hand strength. Sitting and standing balance. Also work on cognition.

COTA - Occupational Therapy Assistant follows care plan of OT.

Pharmacist - Individual who dispenses the medications that you are given at the hospital.

Dietician - Individual who will be involved with monitoring your weight and diet if needed. Patients that are trying to lose or gain weight or those on special diets will see a dietician.

Social Worker and the Case Manager - Discharge from the hospital begins at admission. At the time that you are admitted, the Social Worker and Case Manager will be following your progress. The Case Manager follows the case and communicates with the patient, family, insurance company, nurse and physician concerning their length of stay and eventual discharge.

This entire team of practitioners work together to develop a plan for care. It is important that all members of the team are communicating and have full knowledge of your medical condition.

