

CHECKLISTS TO **GET READY FOR TRANSPLANT**

These checklists are guides to help you get ready for transplant. Not everything in these checklists will apply to you. You can use the checklists to help you come up with questions to ask as you prepare. There are also special checklists for caregivers and parent caregivers starting on page 39.

BEFORE LEAVING **HOME**

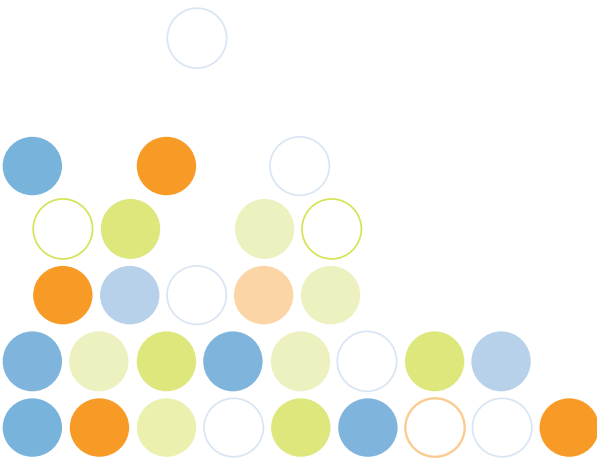
- Make a packing list. Bring clothes for different temperatures and seasons, if appropriate. Include some family photos or posters to brighten your hospital room or temporary living space.
- Get phone numbers, email addresses and mailing addresses of people you want to stay in touch with.
- Arrange for someone to look after your home or apartment (and any pets) while you are away.
- Think about how bills will be paid. When possible, pay ahead. Check with your loan company (such as car or student loan) about temporary deferment of payments (grace period) due to medical disability.
- Have your mail forwarded or have someone collect it for you.
- Ask your doctor how long you might need to stay in the hospital and how long you might need to stay near the hospital.

PLAN FOR BEING **AWAY FROM WORK**

- Make plans with your employer for being away from work. Talk to your Human Resources (HR) representative to help you understand your benefits. Ask about any requirements to keep your health insurance and other benefits active.
- Ask HR about: COBRA insurance, Family Medical Leave, short and long-term disability plans, and employee assistance programs.
- Ask your disability representative to help you apply for Social Security Disability (SSD).

DISCUSS **FAITH AND SPIRITUALITY**

- Set up a time to talk with your family about what each of you believe. Consider talking about what gives you comfort and strength.
- Arrange to keep in touch with your faith community. Community members could send cards, organize a prayer chain or give encouragement in another way.
- You might ask your faith leader to offer special prayers, anointing services or other healing rituals for you and your family.
- Find out if there is a local contact for your faith community in the city where your transplant will take place.



COMMUNICATE WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- Set up family meetings to talk openly about the transplant. Consider meeting with a counselor to help you and your family prepare emotionally for transplant.
- If you have children or grandchildren, you might use books, pictures or videos to help them understand why you're going to the hospital. *Super Sam versus the Marrow Monsters* is an animated video that helps explain transplant to children. Visit [BeTheMatch.org/SuperSam](https://www.bethematch.org/SuperSam) to view Super Sam online or order the free DVD.
- Talk to your children about how they will be cared for while you are in the hospital. Explain who will be with them, their schedules and how you will stay in touch. If you want help talking with your child, contact your hospital social worker or child life specialist.
- Plan how you will stay in touch with family and friends. Some people find it helpful to use social media or free websites, such as [CaringBridge.org](https://www.caringbridge.org) or [CarePages.com](https://www.carepages.com), to post updates. Ask if you can use online video streaming services, such as Skype, in the hospital.
- Your child might benefit from meeting other children who have a family member getting a transplant. Ask your transplant center social worker about available support.
- If friends and family want to know what they can send, consider snacks, meal certificates, long-distance calling cards, or notes of encouragement.
- Make a list of tasks you need help with and share with family and friends. Your list might include: cook meals for family members or drive kids to school.

ORGANIZE YOUR FINANCES

- Keep track of the out-of-pocket costs related to your transplant. Use the **Mapping the Maze** worksheets to help you get started. See the box below for more information.
- Consider fundraising to raise money for out-of-pocket costs. Find trusted fundraising organizations on page 43.
- Talk to your transplant center financial coordinator and your health insurance company to learn what your health insurance will and won't cover.
- Ask your transplant center social worker about:
 - Local organizations that may offer financial assistance
 - Whether you qualify for Social Security programs or Medicaid
- If you are a veteran, contact the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs at (800) 827-1000 to ask about eligibility for any programs based on service record and disability.



We offer resources to help you understand and plan for the financial aspects of transplant. The **Mapping the Maze** series of short, easy-to-understand fact sheets gives information on financial planning, health insurance, the Affordable Care Act and raising money to pay for transplant. You can download or order the fact sheets at [BeTheMatch.org/request](https://www.bethematch.org/request).

ACCESS **LEGAL RESOURCES**

- Complete a will, trust, planning guardianship (if you are a single parent) and advance directive (a living will). Consider naming a trusted person as your medical power of attorney or health care proxy. This person can make decisions for you if you become too ill to do so.
- Consider assigning someone to handle your finances temporarily. If you do not share a joint checking or credit account, talk with your bank to find out how to give someone temporary access to your accounts.
- Talk with a financial or family law attorney if your financial or legal affairs are complicated. Contact your local bar association for a referral.
- If you have children under age 18 who will be away from both parents, give written permission for another adult to take them for medical care (emergency or routine) while you are in the hospital and recovering. Generally, a signed statement is all that is needed, but check with your child's doctor.

PLAN FOR **HEALTH CARE AND PRESCRIPTIONS**

- Schedule any routine dental or medical appointments before your transplant if your transplant center is far from home. Make sure your caregiver does this, too.
- Make a plan for you and your caregiver to get prescriptions renewed or refilled while you're away.

ARRANGE **TRAVEL AND LODGING**

- Check with your health insurance company to see if your policy covers travel, meals and lodging for you and/or your caregiver.
- Ask your transplant center social worker about lodging resources near the transplant center. Ask for costs and whether you need to put your name on a waiting list.
- Make arrangements for traveling to your transplant center. If you need to fly there, you might want to ask family members if they have frequent flyer miles available to help you.
- Find more travel and lodging resources on page 43.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

CHECKLISTS FOR **YOUR CAREGIVER**

Your caregiver will be an important person in your transplant and recovery. The following checklists can help your caregiver understand what some of his or her responsibilities may be.

SUPPORT YOUR **MEDICAL CARE**

- Be with you in the hospital or clinic during doctor visits to listen and ask questions.
- Ask your doctors to explain treatment choices, test results and medicines.
- Keep a notebook to write down treatment information and notes from doctor visits.
- Ask for copies of any treatment summaries and written care instructions.
- Talk with you to understand your treatment goals.

HELP WITH **FINANCES**

- Find out what insurance will pay and what you will need to pay.
- Ask your social worker or financial coordinator about other financial help.
- Make sure household bills are paid on time.

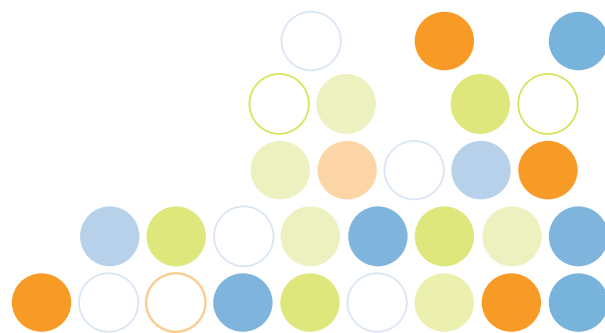
OFFER **EMOTIONAL SUPPORT**

- Be there to listen, to talk or to simply be by your side.
- Spend time with you doing things you both like to do.
- Help communicate with your support system.

SUPPORT **AFTER YOUR TRANSPLANT**

- Help you take the right medicines at the right times.
- Change dressings on your central line, if it's still in place.
- Take you to appointments at the hospital or clinic, sometimes on short notice.
- Protect you from infections by cleaning your home and caring for children and pets.
- Cook food safely and help you follow any rules about what is safe for you to eat.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



CHECKLISTS FOR PARENTS

This is a special checklist to help you prepare for your child's transplant and hospital stay. Some of the suggestions might not apply to you and others will simply help you to think of things to do that aren't listed here.

PREPARE YOUR **CHILD**

- Talk honestly with your child in words he or she will understand. You might use books, videos or pictures to help tell the story. If you want help talking with your child, contact your hospital social worker or child life specialist. Talk about:
 - Who will be at the hospital, and who will care for brothers, sisters or pets at home.
 - What will happen at the hospital and what the schedule might be like.
- Reassure your child that Mom, Dad or another caregiver will be available to help with whatever he or she needs.
- Help your child make a list of items he or she would like to take along.
- Talk with your child's teachers and principal about the plan for schoolwork while your child will be away.
- Talk about ways to keep your child connected with school and friends.
- Check with the Ronald McDonald House near your transplant center to see what prior arrangements can be made for lodging.

PREPARE **BROTHERS & SISTERS**

- Talk with your children to tell them what will be happening within the family while their sibling is going through a transplant.
- If children are staying home, talk with them about who will take care of them. Reassure them they will be taken care of during this time and that you love them.
- If you are a single parent with more than one child, think about who will care for your other children if you must travel for your child's treatment. For example, who can consent for your children's medical care or contact the school while you are away. Talk about this with your child's doctor, teachers and family.
- Talk with your other children about any planned family visits to the transplant center.
- School enrollment might be available at the hospital, Ronald McDonald House or in the community. Talk with your transplant center social worker to see if this option is available.



Think about ways you can take care of yourself so that you will be better able to care for your child. Find resources at [BeTheMatch.org/caregiver](https://www.BetheMatch.org/caregiver) or call **1 (888) 999-6743** to enroll in the ***Parent's Companion program.***