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Medical Safety Kit for Parkinson's Patients

Importance of a Medical Safety Kit

Receipt of medical services for any reason can potentially impact a person with Parkinson's disease (PD). Changes to your medication schedule may occur, leading to complications that could prolong recovery, extend hospital stays, or necessitate follow-up care in a nursing facility.

The Parkinson Association of Alabama (PAA) has developed forms to assist Parkinson's patients and their caregivers in coordinating medical care effectively. These forms can be filled out online, downloaded, and completed with a Movement Disorder Specialist or Neurologist.

Forms Included in the Kit

1. Physician Letter

- Completed and signed by your Neurologist.

- This letter highlights essential information about PD, including:
    - The critical need for compliance with medication dosing times and formulations according to the patient's home regimen.
    - PD medications must be taken within 15 minutes of the at-home schedule.
    - Contraindicated medications and safe substitutions.
    - Recommendations for:
        - Physical activity.
        - Swallow screening.
        - Addressing potential complications such as constipation, pneumonia/infections, and the use of NG tubes.

2. Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) Form *(if applicable)*

- Details related to DBS therapy and its management.

3. Duopa Form *(if applicable)*

- Provides specifics on Carbidopa/Levodopa Enteral Suspension therapy.

4. Special Considerations Regarding Rytary Form *(if applicable)*

- Completed and signed by your Neurologist, detailing considerations for using Rytary.

5. Medication List

- Includes:

    - Medication names.
    - Dosages.
    - Times of dosing.
    - Additional notes.

6. Personal Contacts List

- Emergency contacts and caregivers.

7. Medical Contacts

- Includes contact information for healthcare providers.

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Next Steps for Preparation

1. Review and Complete Forms with Your Clinician

- **Physician Letter**: Ensure it is signed, dated, and includes the Neurologist's contact information.
- **DBS and/or Duopa Forms**: Complete if applicable.
- **Special Considerations Regarding Rytary Form**: Have your Neurologist sign and include their contact details if applicable.

2. Complete Personal Forms

- **Medication List**: Note all medications, doses, timing, and notes.
- **Personal Contacts List**: Update emergency and caregiver information.

3. Make Copies of All Forms

- Assemble several sets of completed forms.

4. Create a "To-Go Kit"

- Include:
    - Sets of completed forms for:
        - Pre-Op appointments.
        - Emergency Department visits.
        - Hospital admissions.
    - Eye mask and ear plugs.
    - Complete set of medications in original prescription bottles.
    - Phone charger.
    - Advanced Healthcare Directive and/or POLST (Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment).
    - Bottle of water.

5. Store the To-Go Kit Strategically

- Place near the front door for easy access during emergencies.

- Keep additional sets of forms:
    - On your refrigerator.
    - In your vehicle(s).

REMEMBER!

YOU are an essential part of the medical team. Share a set of completed forms with staff and ensure they understand that you, or the person you care for, has Parkinson's disease. Clear communication and preparation can significantly improve the quality and safety of medical care.