

Hospital Survival Bag

- 1.** We bought a new pillow and sewed a seam down the center of it; this divided the contents in two. We covered it with a soft pillowcase. (use a colored pillowcase, so the pillow can be easily identified.) My daughter used this the whole time in the hospital and even after we were home. Having a pillow like this helps to take the pressure off the incision.
- 2.** A soft top sheet instead of the hospitals sheets. We have ones that are like t-shirt material and colorful for easy identification, so it doesn't get lost in their laundry.
- 3.** A few favorite stuffed animals to take into surgery. Even though my daughter was 16, she had 3 favorite ones that she took in with her. We made ID bands and placed on the stuffed animals so they wouldn't get lost. The surgery staff made sure we got them back after her surgery started.
- 4.** We brought some food that we knew our daughter would eat. She always eats certain things when she doesn't feel well, so we made sure we had those along.
- 5.** Bring tops that either button up the front or zip. We brought tank tops with spaghetti straps and my daughter had a hard time getting them on and off with the incision and with the IVs. She wore comfortable pajama pants to the hospital, during the hospital stay and on the way home. Sometimes she wore long ones and sometimes she wore shorts. It was much more comfortable than a hospital gown.
- 6.** Snacks for the parents, because at times you may not want to leave the room.
- 7.** CD player and headphones. My daughter used this all the time. It drowns out the hospital noise and helped her to relax and sleep.
- 8.** Calling card. When she felt up to it, we called her friends and let her talk for a few minutes.
- 9.** We had at least 6 pillows in the car for the ride home. My daughter was given a pain pill before she left and she had another something along the way. Unfortunately we left during rush hour traffic and what should have been a 2 hour ride was 4 1/2.
- 10.** Definitely lotion for patient and parents. The air is very dry in the hospital and the soap is harsh and your hands/skin can get really dry.

- 11.** Another suggestion is a pen and notebook. Every day we wrote down questions for the neurosurgeon. He would answer each and every one and he even took the time to write some of the answers himself as well as verbally tell us.
- 12.** Camera (we took a lot of pictures)
- 13.** A small tape recorder to tape conversations with the doctors
- 14.** A hot/cold pack to use at the hospital when the nurses are taking too long and to use on the plane
- 15.** A book or cross-word puzzle
- 16.** A robe
- 17.** An address book of numbers to look up those who are waiting for that "after surgery" call
- 18.** Ear plugs
- 19.** A sleep mask
- 20.** Mints, lozengers or candy
- 21.** Change for the pop machines
- 22.** Cloraseptic spray or lozengers (if your doctor allows you)
- 23.** High protein snacks like protein bars, nuts, etc.
- 24.** A box of chocolates or candies to let the nurses sneak a piece when they are in the room (helps to make them a little quicker to answer your calls too).
- 25.** Lotion; toothbrush, toothpaste; a comb (some hospitals supply you with these items, some do not, it also makes it cheaper because you can decline the hospitals and not pay \$10.00 (an exaggeration) for a tube of toothpaste!
- 26.** Slippers that have tread on the bottoms
- 27.** Cell phone charger
- 28.** A garbage bag for your dirty clothes