

Hospital Survival Kit

Tips to make your stay more bearable

- Cool pyjamas! They're softer and more comfortable than a hospital gown, they cover your butt, and they make you feel like a human being rather than just a patient. Don't forget the slippers - ones that you can slide in and out of easily.

- A couple of beanies or scarves. Hospital rooms can be very cold and most of your body heat is lost from your head. Soft material is best as bald heads are sensitive!

- Stuff to put on the walls. Photos, children's drawings, colourful prints - the brighter the better! Cards, decorations or origami could be hung there too. Move things around every so often for a change of scenery.

- A music source such as a CD or mp3 player and lots of CDs. Mellow music may be best but more upbeat options can cheer you up. Bring music you know you like.

- Light reading. Crosswords are good but you may not have the mental activity to tackle them all the time. The same applies for heavy reading so detective thrillers, trashy romances or magazines may be more appropriate.

- A camera to take photos of the friends and family who come to visit.

- Home videos - they remind you of the people who love you and how much you have to live for. Funny movies will also cheer you up.

- Stuff to make the room smell nice. It's also relaxing to soak your feet in a basin of warm water with essential oils such as lavender or rosemary. It makes your feet feel great and the room smell wonderful.

- Paper and writing utensils. Good for writing letters, keeping track of questions for the doctor, figuring out the TV channels, or writing lists of things you want from home.

- A computer to keep in touch with friends, play games, or surf the net. If you're particularly computer savvy you may want to create your own webpage where you can write blogs and post photos.

- Message bank on your phone for when you're too tired or cranky to take people's calls.

- If you're the creative type – portable hobby kits such as knitting or scrapbooking can keep you occupied in waiting rooms for hours.

If you're allowed, other things like your own pillow or doona cover will make the room more homely and less sterile. Let's face it, staying in hospital isn't fun, but indulging your creature comforts will make your stay more bearable and even entertaining.