

Observation



Observation Status

- » Observation is an outpatient service provided within the hospital. You are not admitted as an inpatient because your physician has determined that your current condition does not meet inpatient requirements.
- » The purpose of observation status is to allow your physician time for ongoing assessment or short-term medical treatment to determine if you need to be admitted as an inpatient or are well enough to be discharged.
- » Your expected length of stay is usually less than 24 hours and may be up to 48 hours
- » You may have to pay for services beyond 48 hours. If you are a Medicare patient, you will be notified in writing if you are responsible for these charges.
- » You will receive the same quality of care from the physician and nursing staff as any other patient in the hospital
- » You may qualify for observation level of care if you have symptoms without a definite illness or are expected to stay less than two nights. Examples of symptoms include:
 - Chest pain
 - Urinary Tract Infection
 - Abdominal Pain
 - Dehydration
 - Fainting
 - Diarrhea



At observation level of care the following may apply:

Non-Medicare Insurance:

- » Your coverage depends on the insurance plan you've selected. If you have questions please call the phone number on the back of your insurance card.

Traditional Medicare:

- » Medicare may not pay for a nursing home or swing bed following your observation stay.
- » Some medications may not be covered.
- » During your stay, you will receive a Medicare Outpatient Observation notice regarding your level of care.
- » If you have questions, please see the back of this document for further information.

Medicare Advantage:

- » Your coverage depends on the Medicare Advantage plan you've selected. During your stay, you will receive a Medicare Outpatient Observation notice regarding your level of care.
 - » If you have questions please call the phone number on the back of your insurance card.
- *If you have any questions about your insurance coverage, talk to a member of your care team.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What is the difference between inpatient, observation and outpatient?

Altru is required to review your level of care when you enter the hospital. You will be assigned one of the following:

- » Inpatient: Medically complex and expected to be in the hospital more than two nights.
- » Outpatient Observation: Not medically complex or not expected to be in the hospital two nights.
- » Outpatient: Procedure with a length of stay less than two nights.

Are medications covered under observation status?

- » Covered medications: medications given through an IV and some chemotherapy medications.
- » Not covered medication: medications that you normally give yourself at home also referred to as self-administered medications (example, medications taken by mouth, rectally, or injectables such as insulin).

Medications not covered during your stay may be partially reimbursed through your Medicare D plan. If you would like an itemized list of medication to submit with your Medicare D claim, contact the Patient Financial Services at 701.780.1500.

Is this a qualifying stay for a nursing home?

No, because observation level of care is considered an outpatient service.

If I am a Medicare patient where can I go for further information?

Visit www.Medicare.gov or by calling 1.800.633.4227.

What if I have further questions about my observation status?

If you have further questions, please contact a member of your healthcare team.