



## What to pack for hospital admission

*by Josie Padro*

Caring for someone with an illness can mean frequent trips to hospital. Packing a few essentials in advance can mean one less thing to do when you're heading out the door, especially in an emergency.

Remember that whatever you take could easily be lost amid all the equipment and activity, so never bring anything valuable or irreplaceable.

- Documentation—Care Card number, a list of medications and supplements, a list of allergies, contact information for the person's family doctor and any specialists they are seeing.
- Enduring Power of Attorney or Representation Agreement.
- Toiletries—toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, shaving supplies.
- Glasses, dentures, walking aides.
- Tissues—these are often supplied at the hospital, but are often hard to come by.
- Hand sanitizer—this can come in handy for patients who are unable to walk to the sink to wash their hands. They'll be able to clean their hands when they feel the need.
- Hand lotion—while heavy scents may not be welcome by roommates, gently scented lotions can provide a little aromatherapy. Caregivers can use the lotion with a hand and facial massage. Many people confined to bed find foot massage a welcome comfort measure.
- A sweater, shawl or light blanket. These items can provide warmth as well as an element of familiarity. Be sure not to take anything of great sentimental value.

A note about electronics: cell phones, laptops and electronic readers can be immensely helpful for passing the time and staying in touch. They can also easily go missing and will not be replaced by the hospital. You and the person you care may decide that the benefits are worth the risk.