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[\*Beauty in Broken Dreams: A Hopeful Handbook for the Early Years as a Special Needs Parent\*](#)

## Hospital Packing List

Packing for a hospital stay is most definitely not the same as packing for vacation. Think comfort, not cute. Here is a packing list to get you started based off some things you may experience in a hospital setting.

### BATHROOM

Staying organized in the bathroom is key. You may get moved from one floor to another and you'll want to make moving rooms easy. Bring a small bin or tub to keep your toiletries in so they stay clean and easy to grab. The hospital is dry and you will be washing your hands a lot so don't forget things like eye drops and lotion to stay moisturized. You may also want to bring something aromatic to mask the smell of saved output. All output needs to get weighed or measured and it can stink. If you don't like cheap toilet paper and kleenex, bring your own. The hospital will provide towels.

- Toiletries
- Eye drops
- Lotion
- Bathrobe
- Lysol or essential oils diffuser
- Toilet paper
- Kleenex
- Feminine products
- Flushable wipes

### BEDDING

It may be hard to sleep on a pull out couch or oversized chair, on top of being constantly interrupted throughout the night. Here are some things that might make it more cozy, especially if you are staying for a long time.

- Egg crate foam topper
- Sleeping bag or blanket (hospital blankets are thin and linty)
- Pillow

## **CLOTHES/SHOES**

Again, think comfort. The hospital is cold and sterile, so dress accordingly.

- Slip on shoes or flip flops
- Comfortable clothes
- Sweater
- Socks

## **KIDS STUFF**

This varies according to your child's age and needs, but here are some things to consider.

- Comfortable clothes
- Socks
- Blanket
- Special medical supplies, medications, formula, etc. that you think the hospital may not supply
- Favorite toys
- Entertainment: mobile, bubbles, shows/games on the tablet, mirror, books, music, etc.

## **ELECTRONICS**

- Tablet or laptop (plus charger)
- Phone (plus charger)
- DVDs (many hospitals also have DVDs you can borrow)
- Mini speakers for music
- White noise machine
- Indoor extension cord

## **OTHER**

- Tape, scissors, and paper, or a blanket. Something to block out the light coming through the windows around the doors.
- Notepad or journal to take notes of who said what and questions you may have. You may also need to record concerning symptoms, names of visitors, etc.
- Snacks and drinks. Set up a little "station" of snacks. You can also place some things in the floor fridge as well.

You may also have unexpected hospital admissions. I keep a “Go Bag” and toiletry bag at the ready, just in case we are unexpectedly admitted. The Go Bag contains a set of all Nathan’s medical supplies I need to make it through a twenty-four-hour period with my child. I can, and I have, grabbed it quickly in an emergency situation. The toiletry bag is of course for me. I know that I have the essentials of a toothbrush, hairbrush, and a place to put my contacts. I could sleep on a rock and be ready to go the next morning as long as I have fresh breath, combed hair and haven’t worn my contacts all night long.

## Personal Inventory of Priorities

I quickly realized that life would not return to how it was before Nathan was born. Rather than resist the changes, I took an inventory of what I could **keep doing** and what I needed to **let go of**—at least in the short-term—and also what I desperately needed to **fight to maintain** in my life. This is what it looked like for me in the beginning:

- **Keep Doing but Do Different:** Cooking healthy meant making easy fresh meals but not all the time. I began freezing meals and stopped being ashamed to serve the same thing twice for dinner in one week. I also began to better divide and conquer essential administrative tasks with my husband (things like paying bills, making phone calls to doctors and insurance companies).
- **Let Go Of:** Yard work, cleaning my house, various mom group gatherings, book club, and working out (short-term only, long-term working out is definitely a fight-to-hold-onto for me).
- **Fight to Hold Onto:** Writing, reading my Bible, and getting away by myself for coffee even if for a little bit.

It was very helpful for me to jot these things down. That way, when I got overwhelmed about everything I had to manage, I had already decided in advance what I would still do, what I outsourced, and what I stopped doing altogether.

I encourage you to start a list of your priorities by taking inventory of the responsibilities on your plate.

Keep Doing, but Do Different:

Let Go Of:

Fight to Hold Onto:

# Personal Inventory of Priorities

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as a Special Needs Parent



## Keep Doing It, but Differently

## Let Go of It

When you encounter a crisis and are overwhelmed by the complex emotions of the situation, the bills still need to be paid and the lawn needs to be mowed. Use this worksheet to take an inventory of your responsibilities. What do you need to keep doing, but differently? For example, outsourcing lawn service and housecleaning. What can you let go of, at least in the short term, like cooking? What do you desperately need to fight to maintain in your life, such as running or prayer? This will help you as you face many--big and little--decisions ahead.

## Fight to Hold Onto It

Adapted from *Beauty in Broken Dreams* by Kathy McClelland,  
available on Amazon