## Communication boards for nonverbal or nonspeaking patients

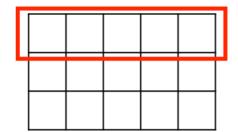
If it is difficult for the patient to point, please use partner-assisted scanning.

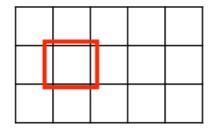
**STEP 1:** Ensure good lighting, stable head positioning, and clear sight lines between you and the patient. Have the individual put on their glasses and/or hearing aids before you start. Remove masks and other PPE if possible so you can see each other's faces.

**STEP 2:** Agree upon the patient's "yes" gesture (e.g., nod, slow blink, thumbs up). Agree upon the patient's "no" or "mistake" gesture (e.g., thumbs down, frown, two blinks). Make sure they can answer "yes" or "no" reliably to some basic questions about who they are. Speak loudly and clearly, using simple language.

**STEP 3:** Hold the tool approximately 1-2 feet from the patient's face. Ask the patient to focus on the communication board and find the message they want to communicate. Point to the first row and ask, "Is it in the first row?" If the patient indicates "no" or does not respond, move to the second row and ask, "Is it in the second row?" etc.

**STEP 4:** Once the patient indicates YES to their target row, point to each message within the selected row: "Is it suction? Trouble breathing?" etc.





**STEP 5:** Once the patient chooses an item within the row, speak their choice out loud and verify that this is what they meant. "You said you need suction. Is that right?" The patient can then signal "yes" or "no" to confirm their response.

• If the board seems too complex or too much to look at, try folding the paper over to isolate just the messages you think they may want to communicate to you, then return to Step 3. Many of the boards are organized to group similar symbols together (e.g., hygiene needs regarding "hair" are all in the same column) for faster scanning. You can also consider covering symbols with sticky notes if they do not seem personally relevant to the patient.

**STEP 6:** When you've finished communicating with the patient, make sure to document what worked best! If the patient can't use this tool effectively now, that does not mean they won't be able to use it later today, tomorrow, or this week. Continue to provide opportunities to support communication as able.



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## In the hospital room

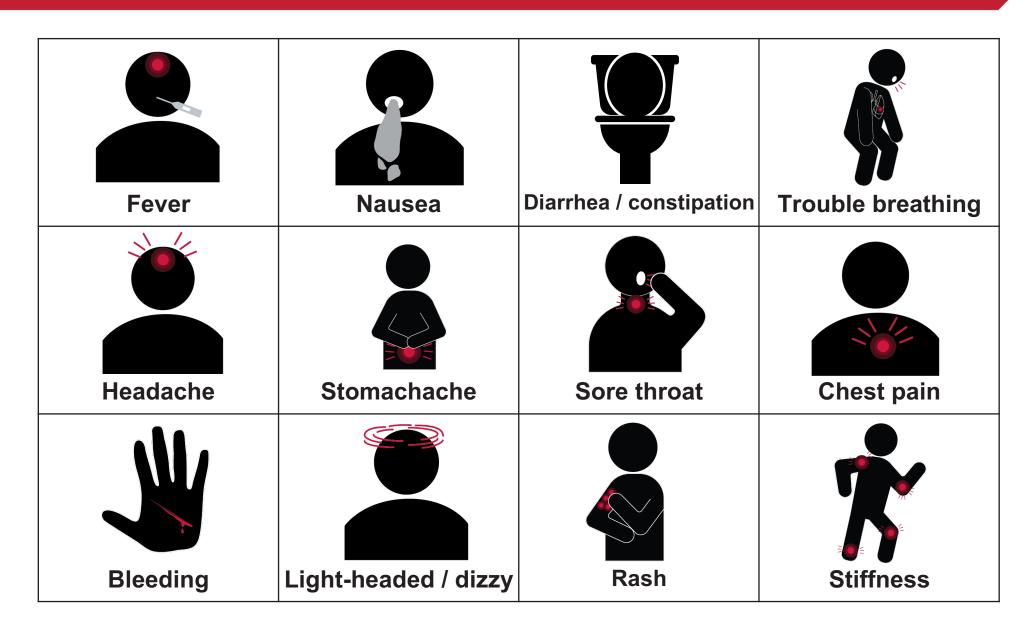
## I'm uncomfortable







## I'm in pain







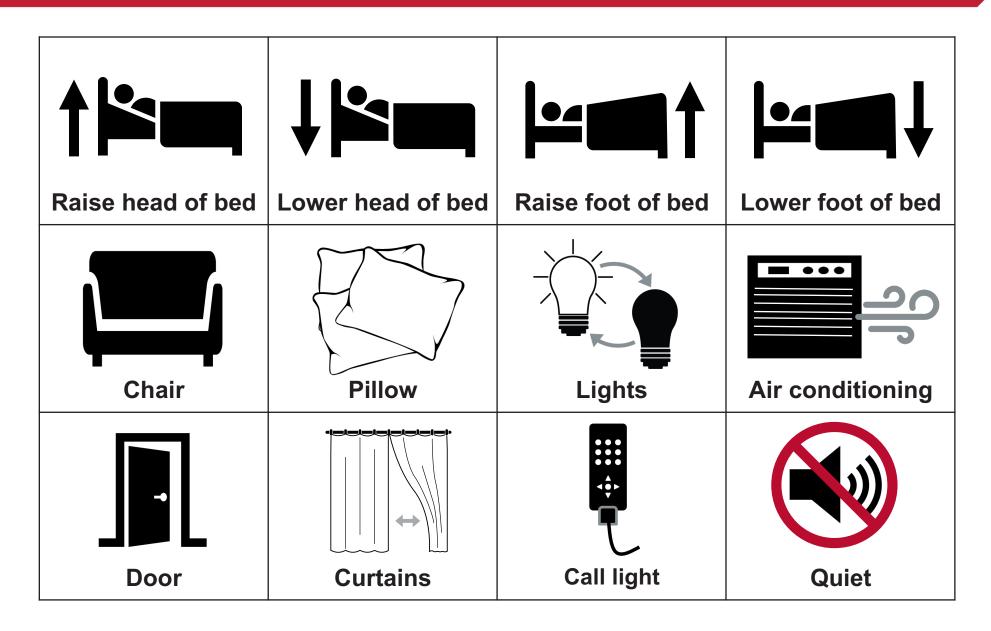
## Get cleaned up







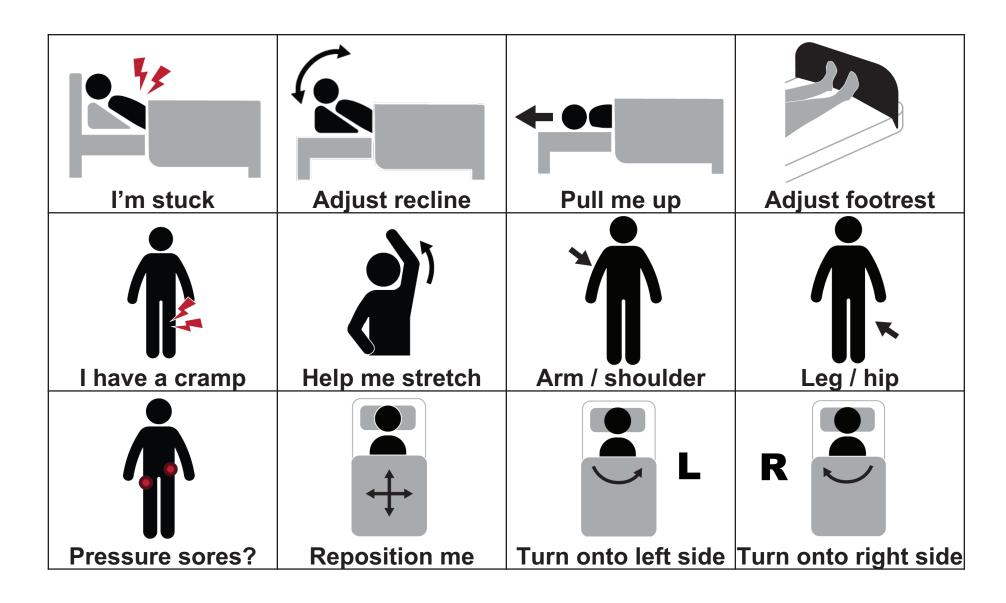
## Adjust my...







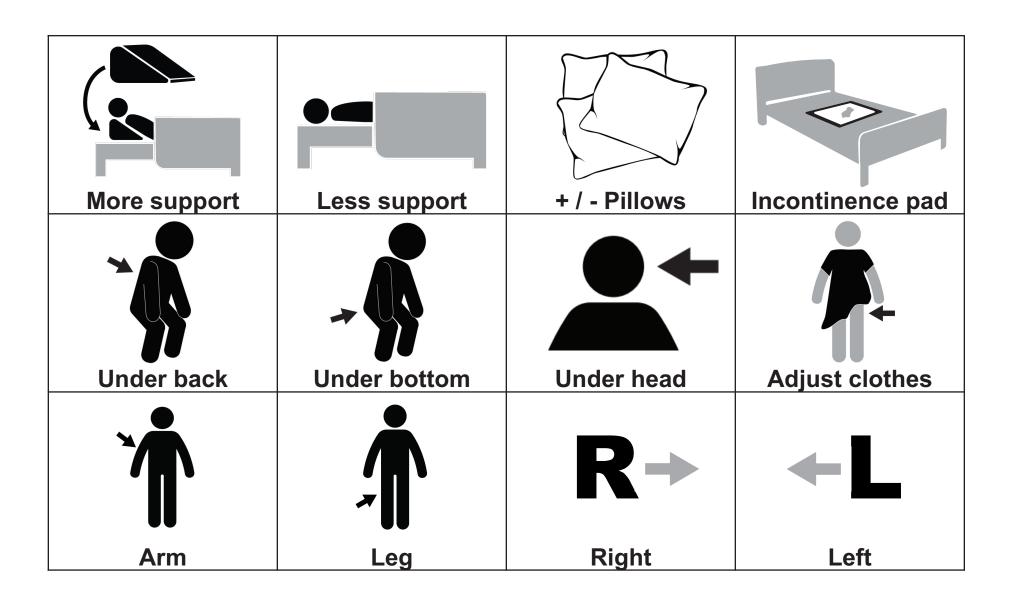
## **Bed positioning**



ABC... I will spell



## Help me get comfortable







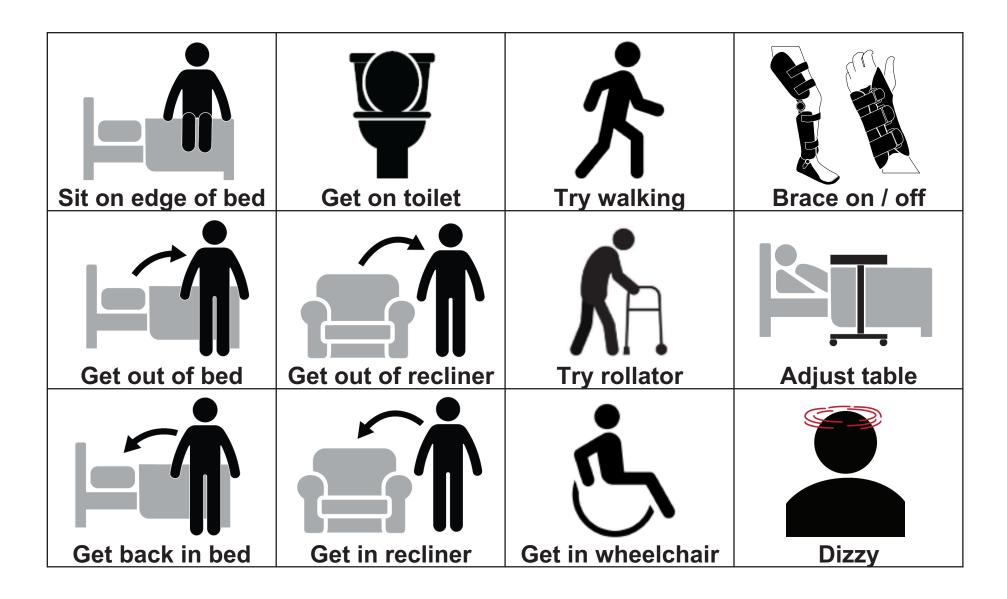
## Something to do







## **Transfers and mobility**

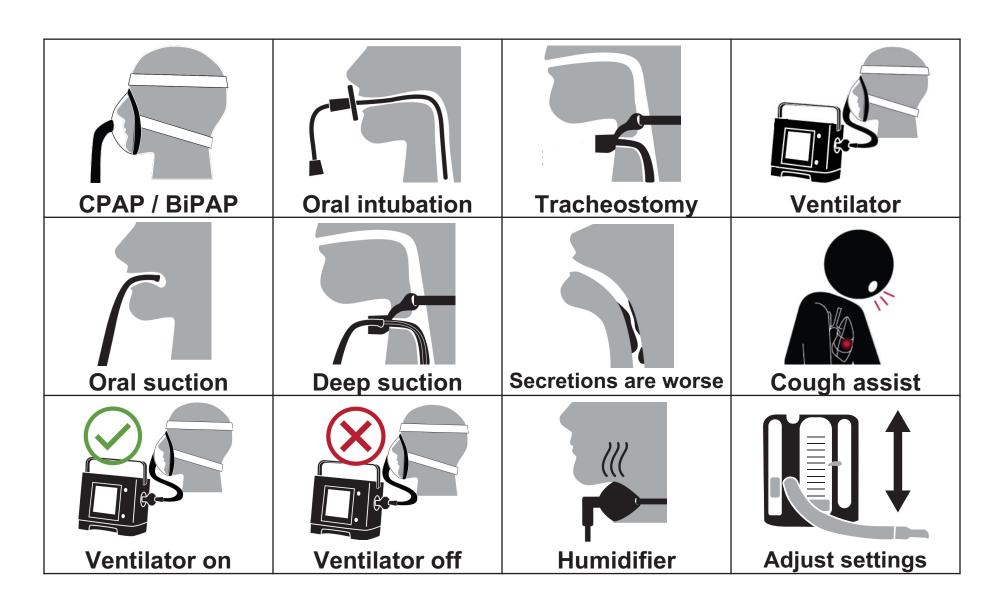






## Breathing and feeding

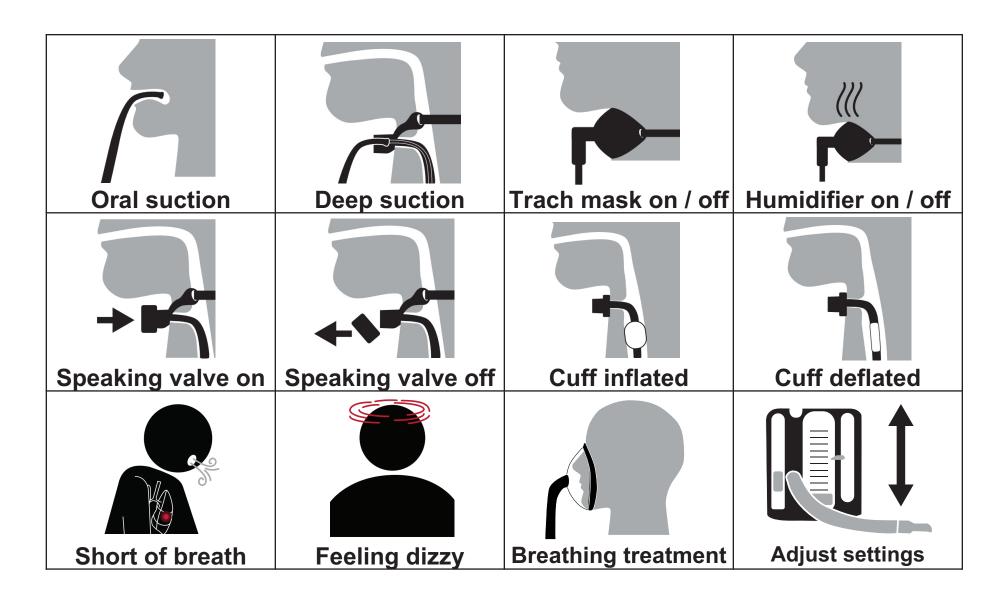
## **Breathing needs**



ABC... I will spell



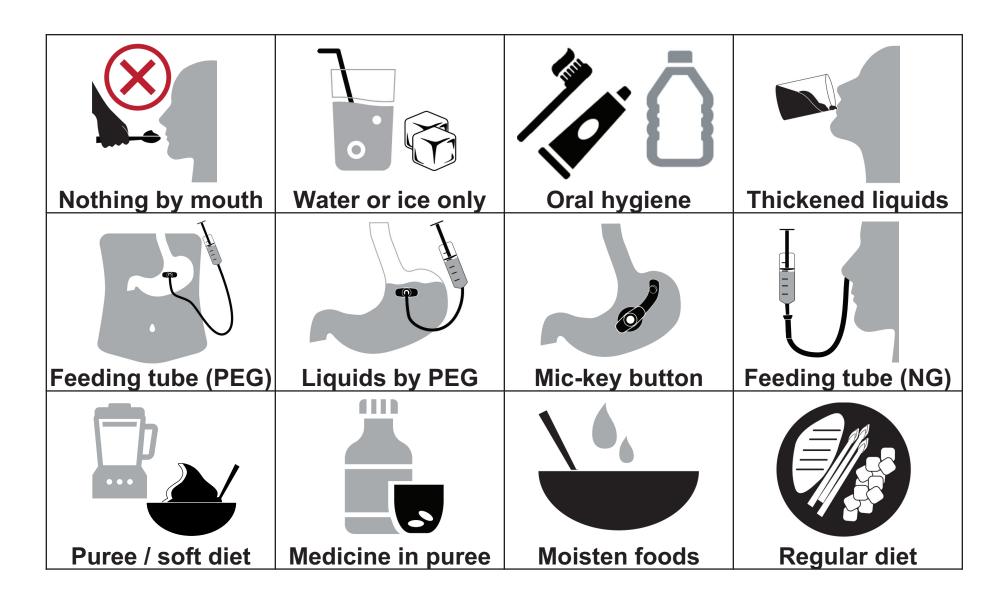
## **Speech and breathing**







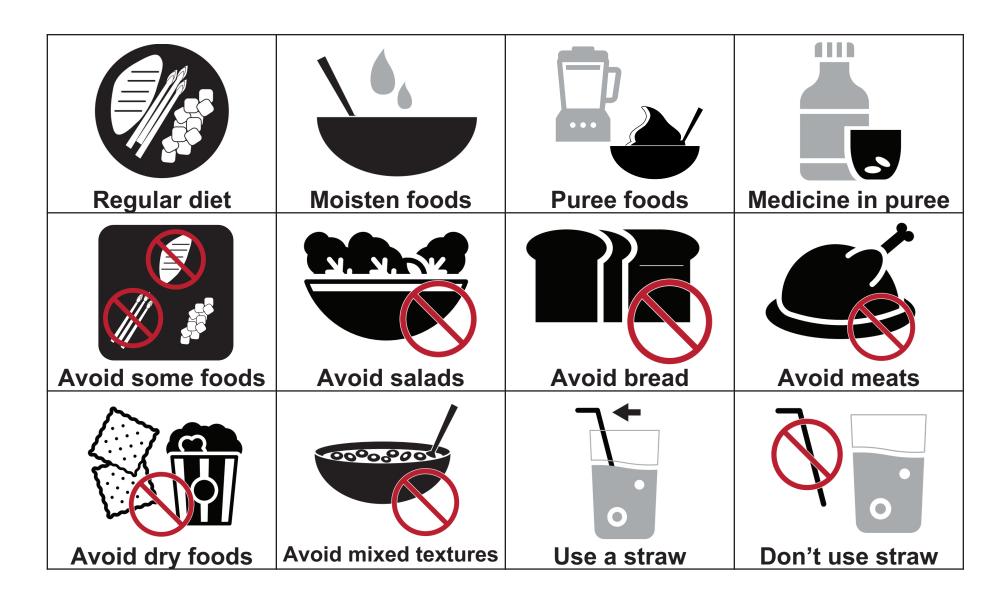
## **Nutrition options**







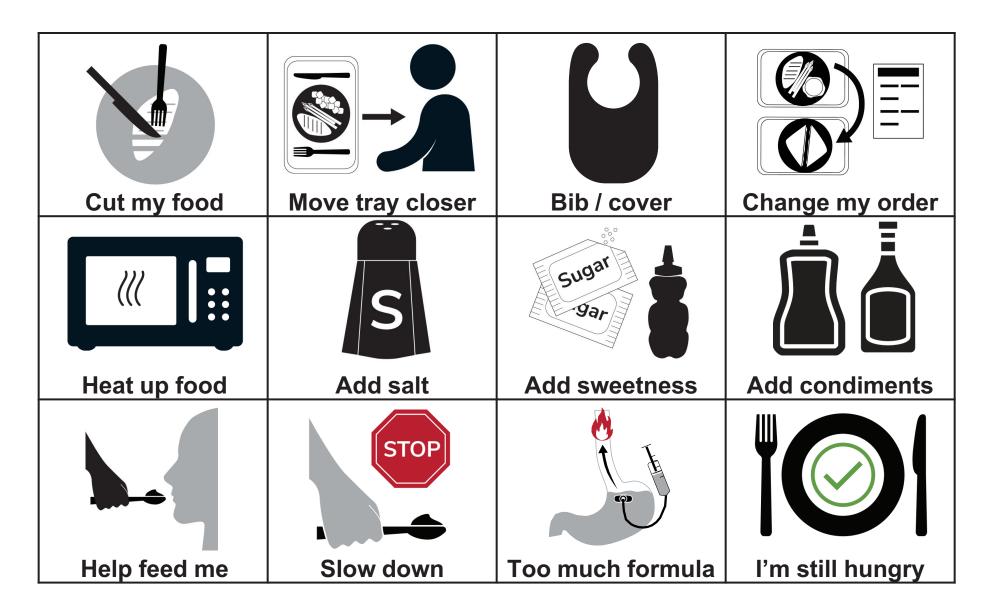
## Diet options for swallowing trouble







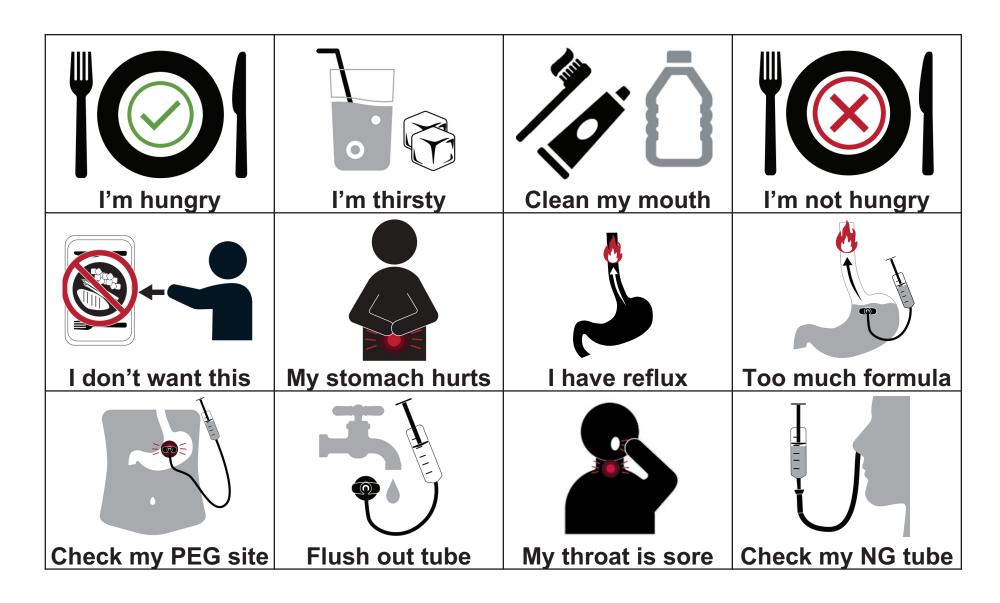
## Help me with my meal



ABC... I will spell



## **Concerns with eating and feeding**

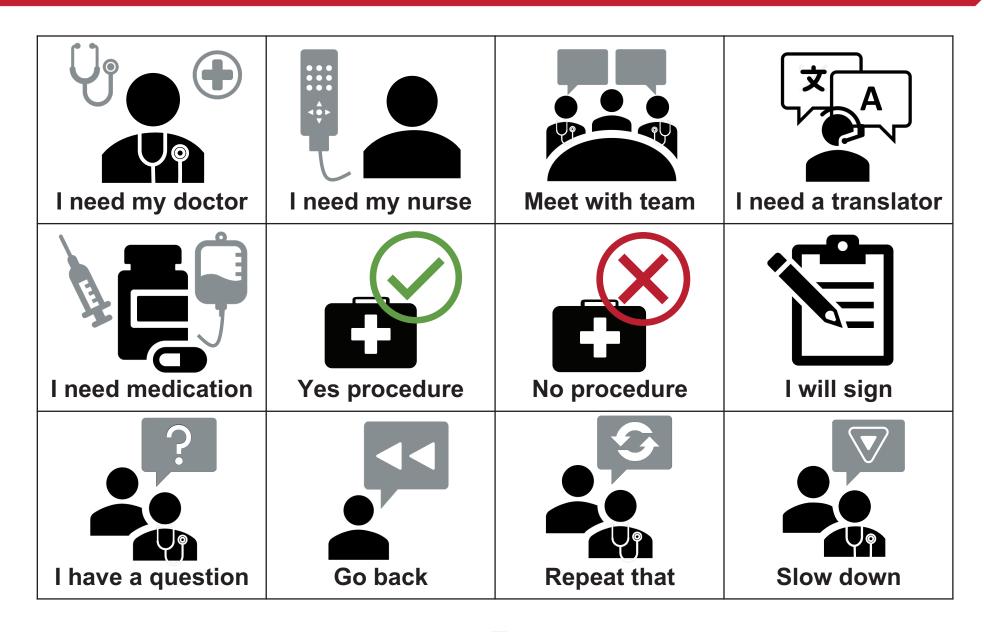






# Directing care

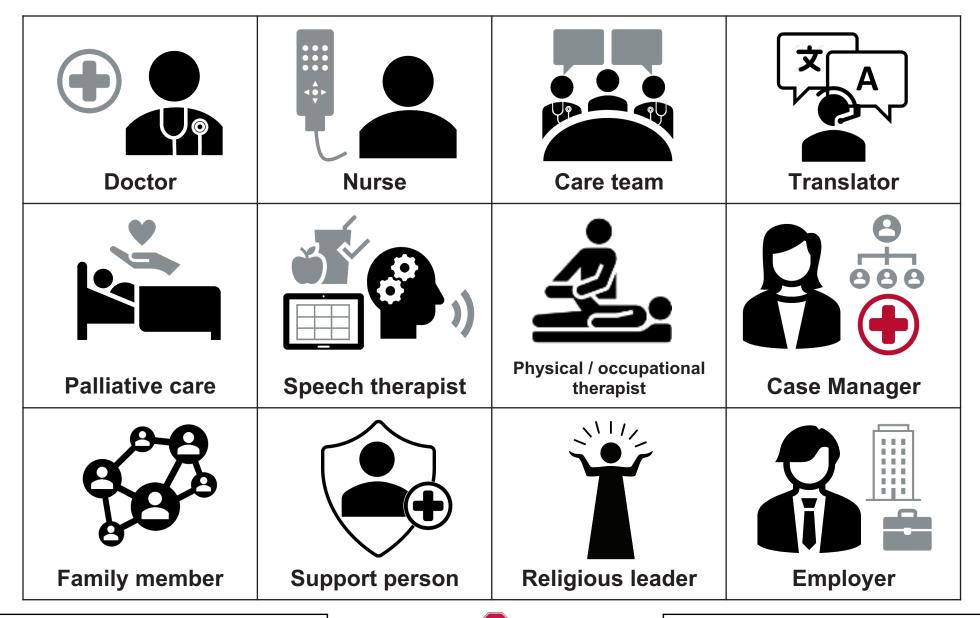
## Include me



ABC... I will spell



## I need to talk to



ABC... I will spell





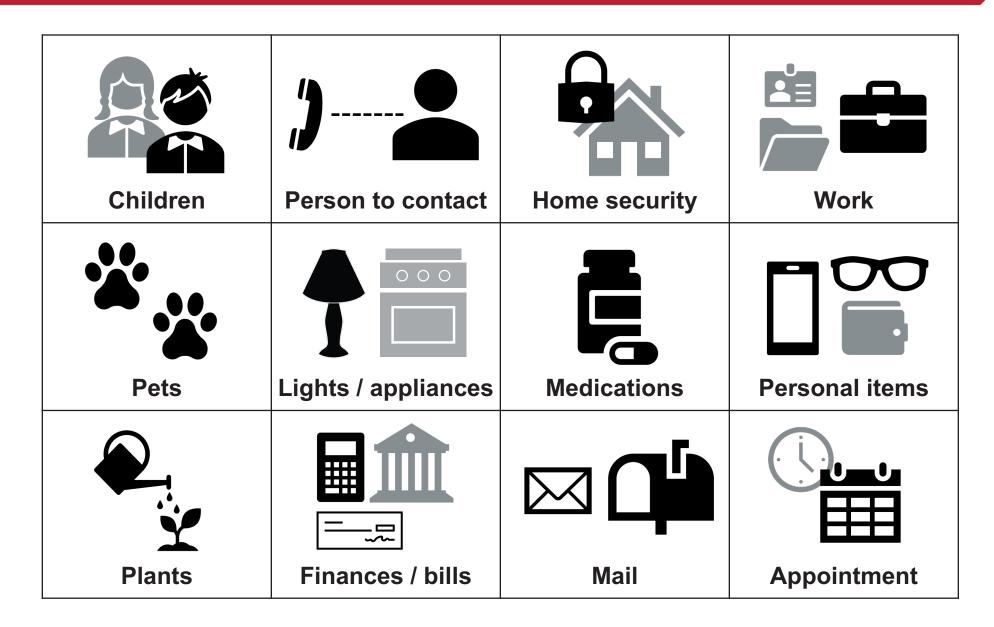
## I need to tell you







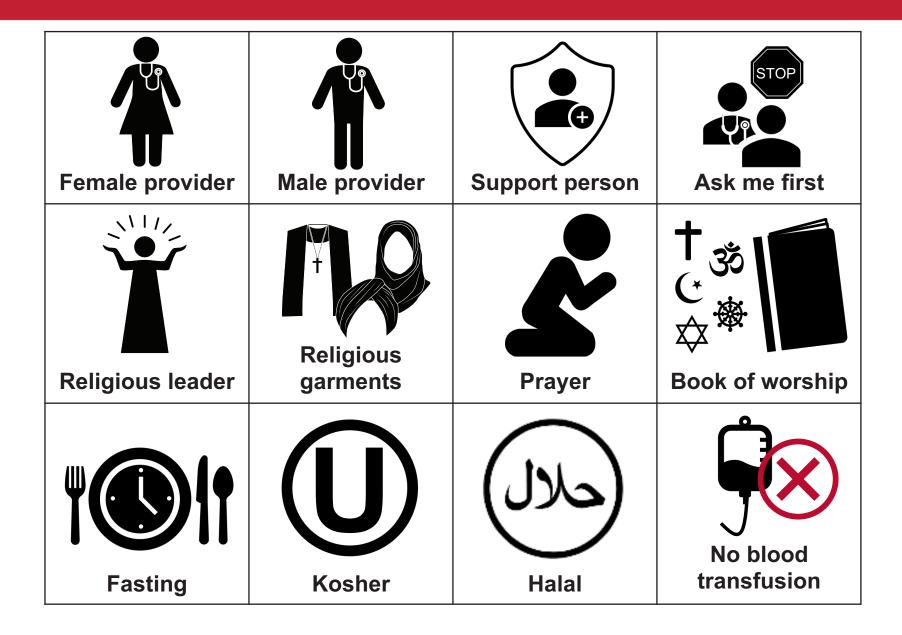
## **Back at home**



ABC... I will spell



## **Preferences**



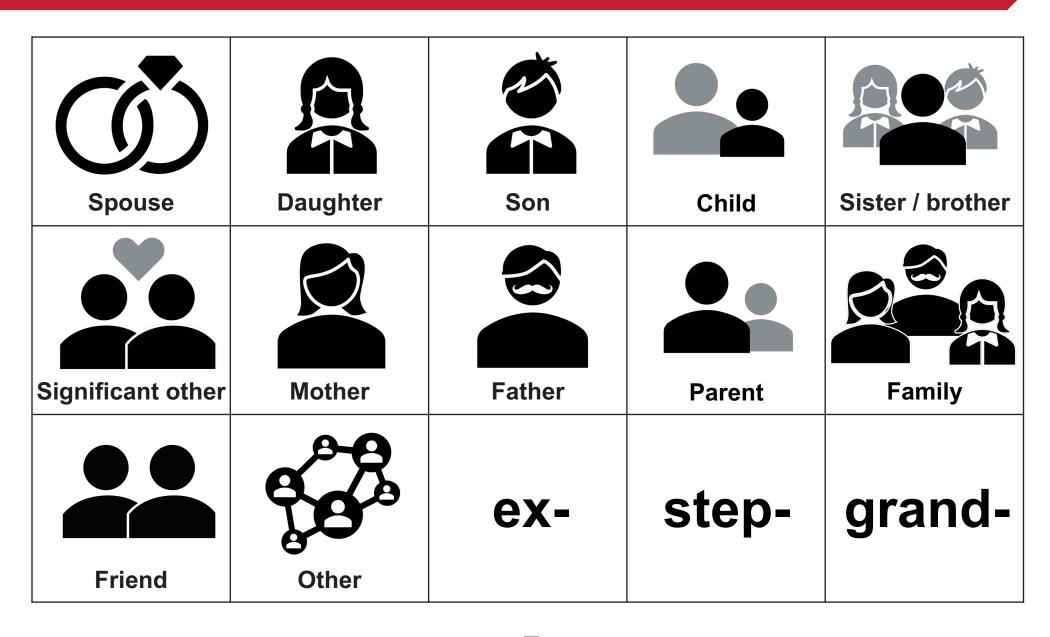
ABC... I will spell





## **Background information**

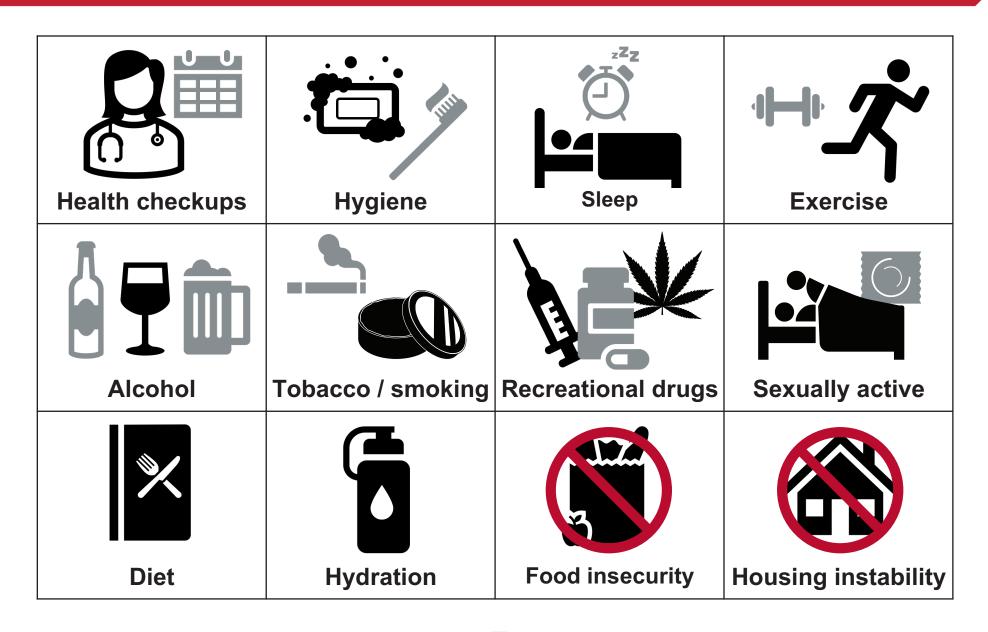
## **Family**







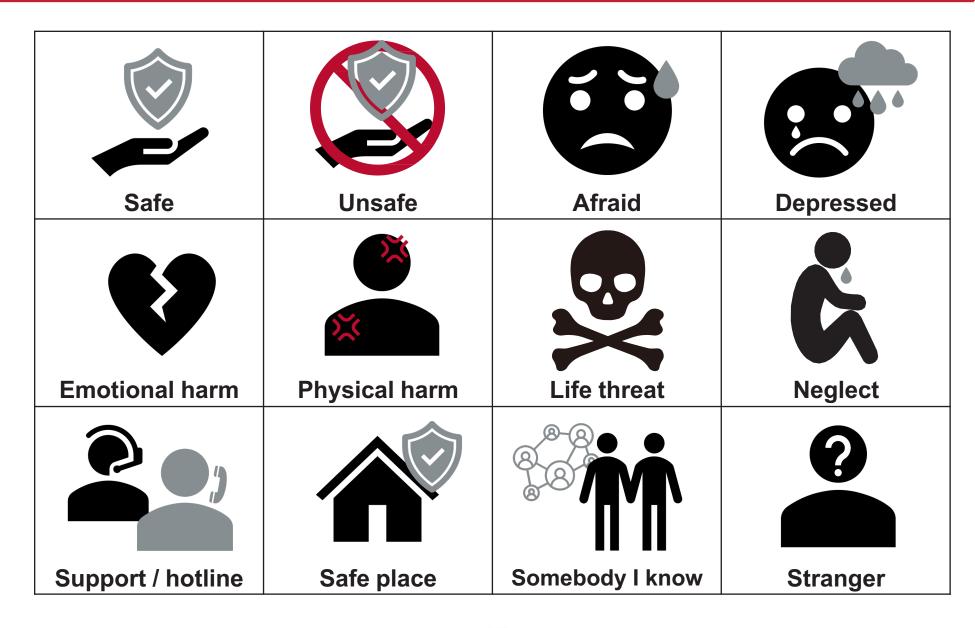
## My health







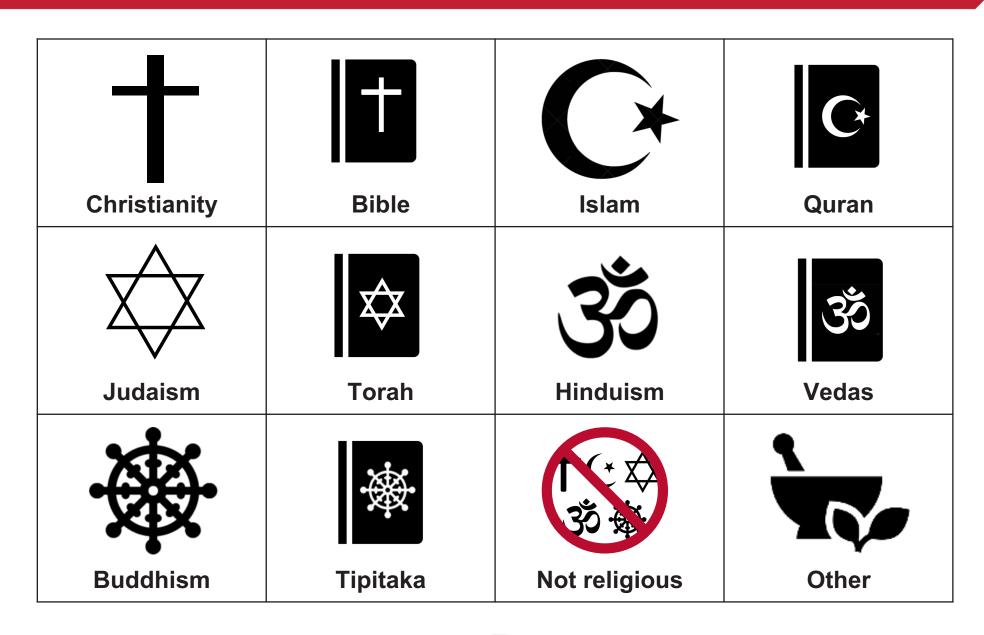
## **Safety and violence**







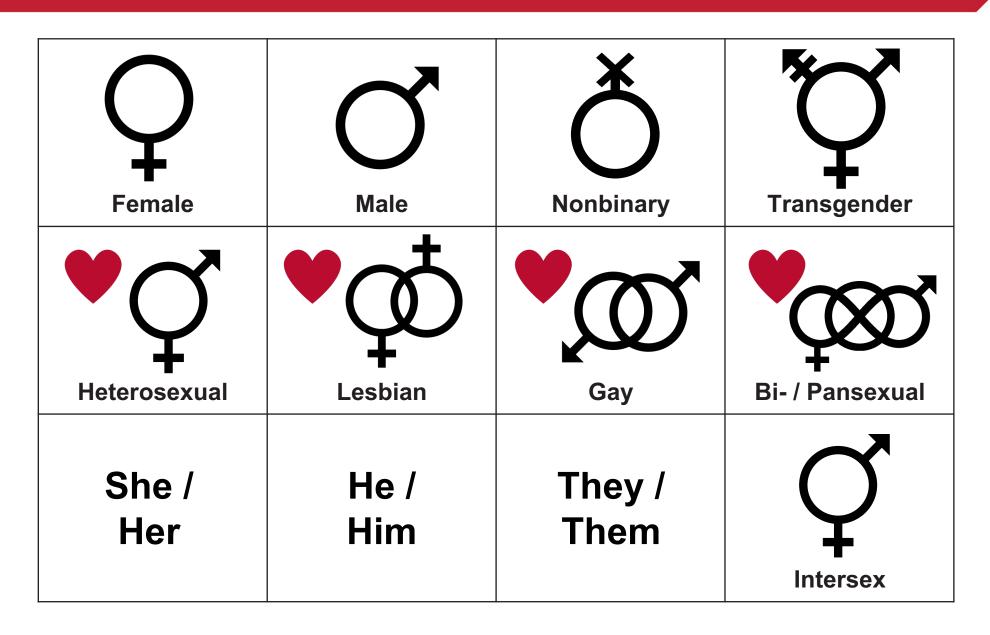
## Religion



ABC... I will spell



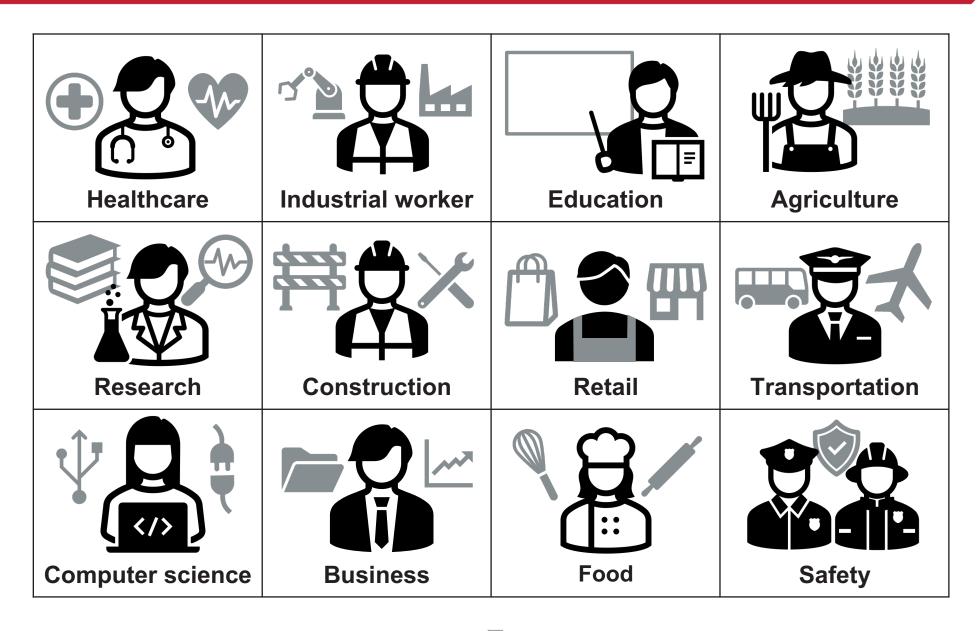
## **Gender and Sexual Identity**







## Type of work

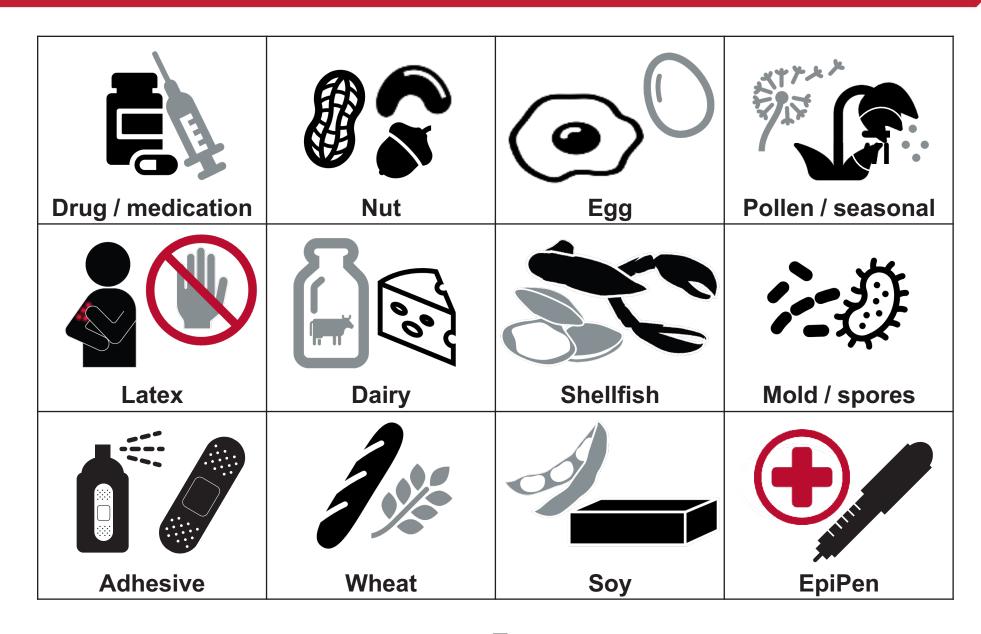






## **Medical history**

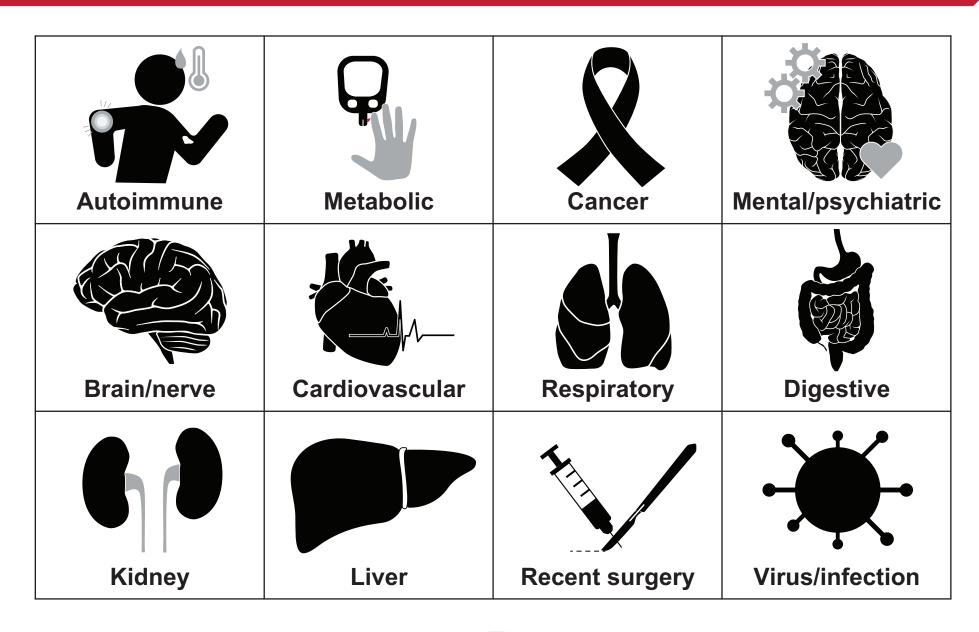
## My allergies







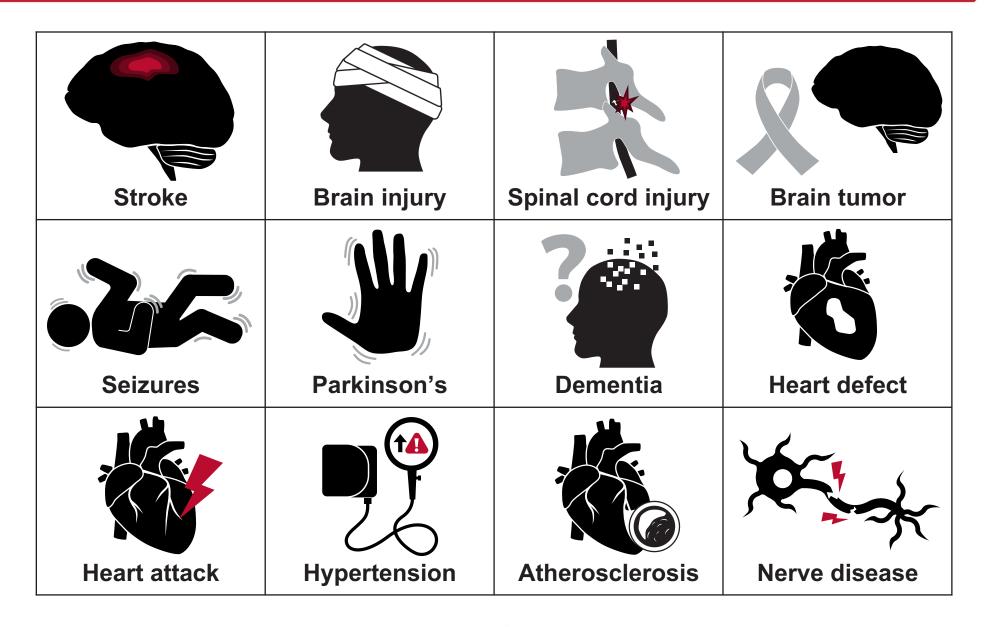
## **Pre-existing conditions**







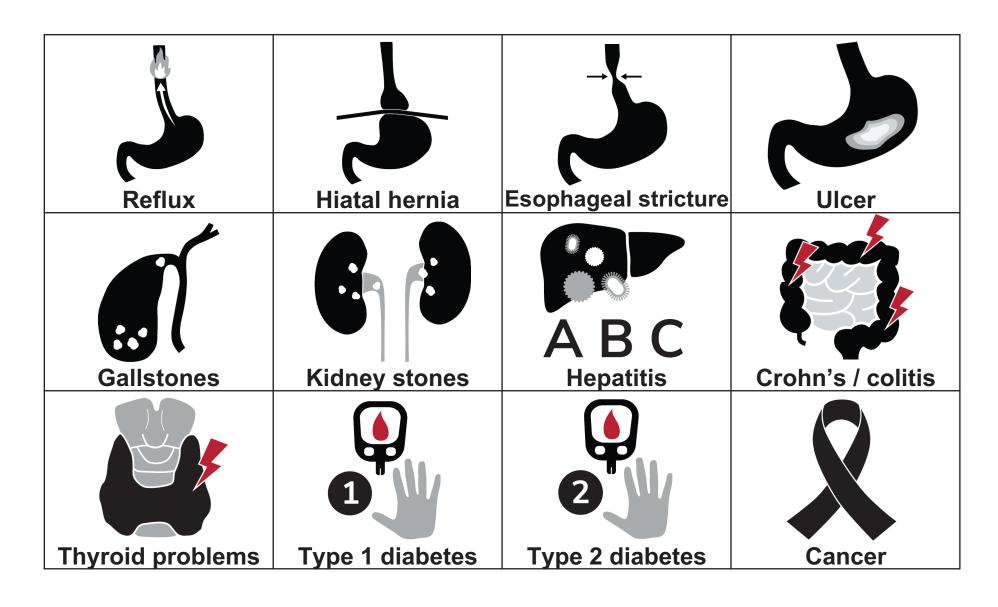
## Neurological and cardiovascular







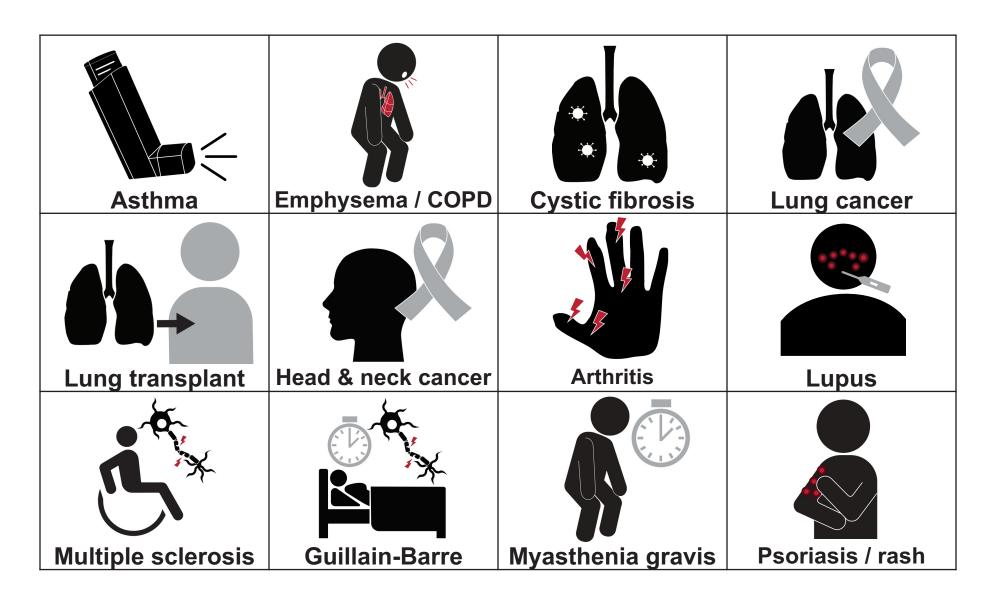
## **Digestive and metabolic disorders**



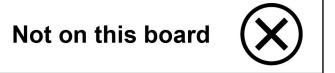




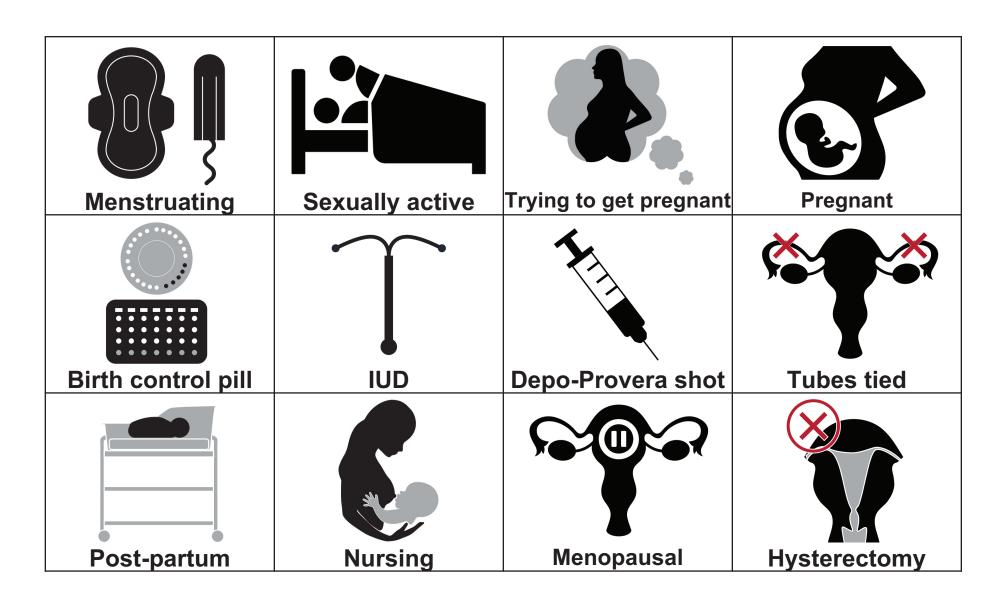
#### Respiratory and autoimmune disorders







#### **Reproductive and OB-GYN status**

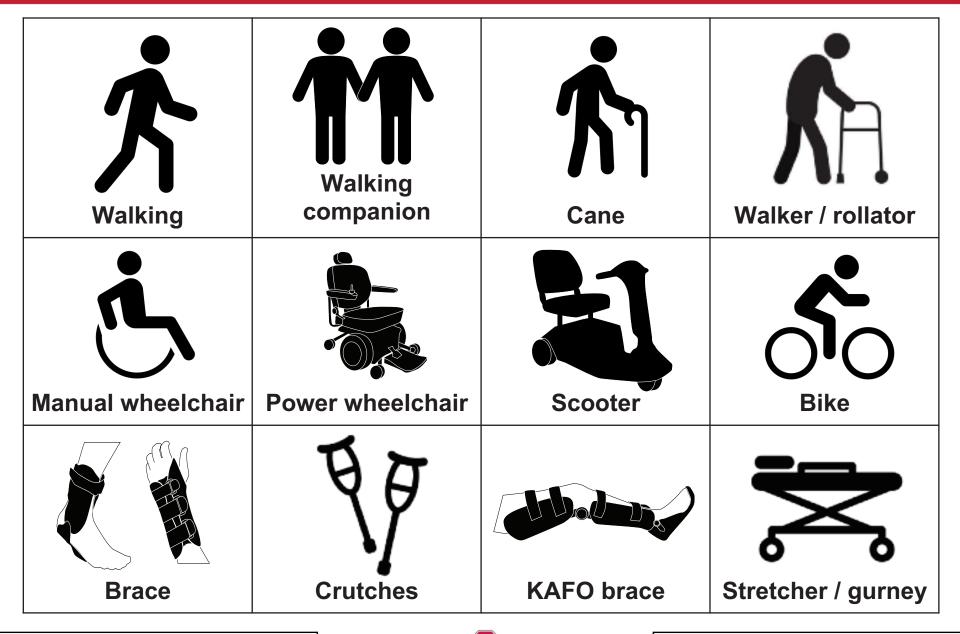






## Rehab goals

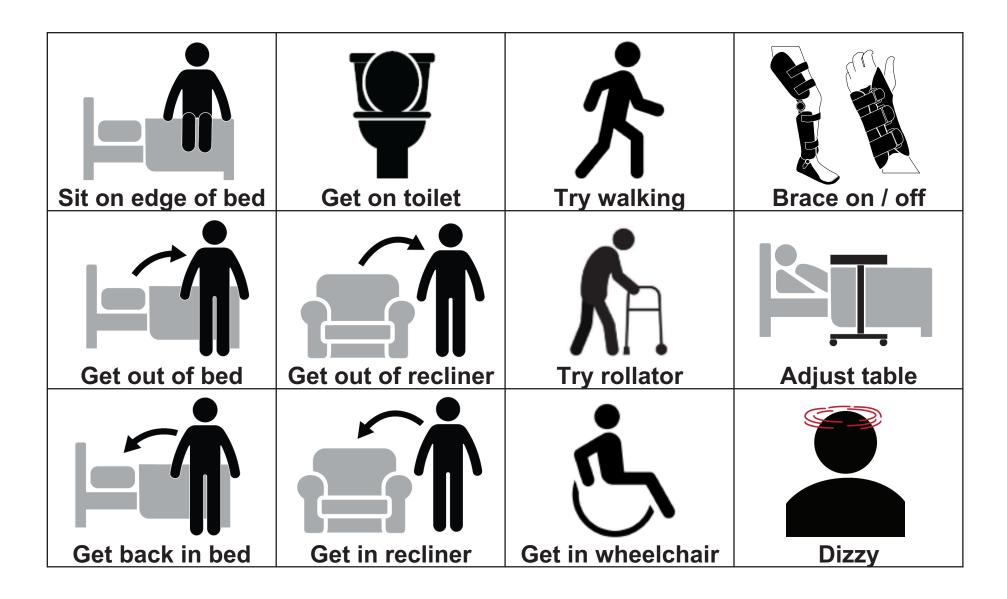
## **Mobility**







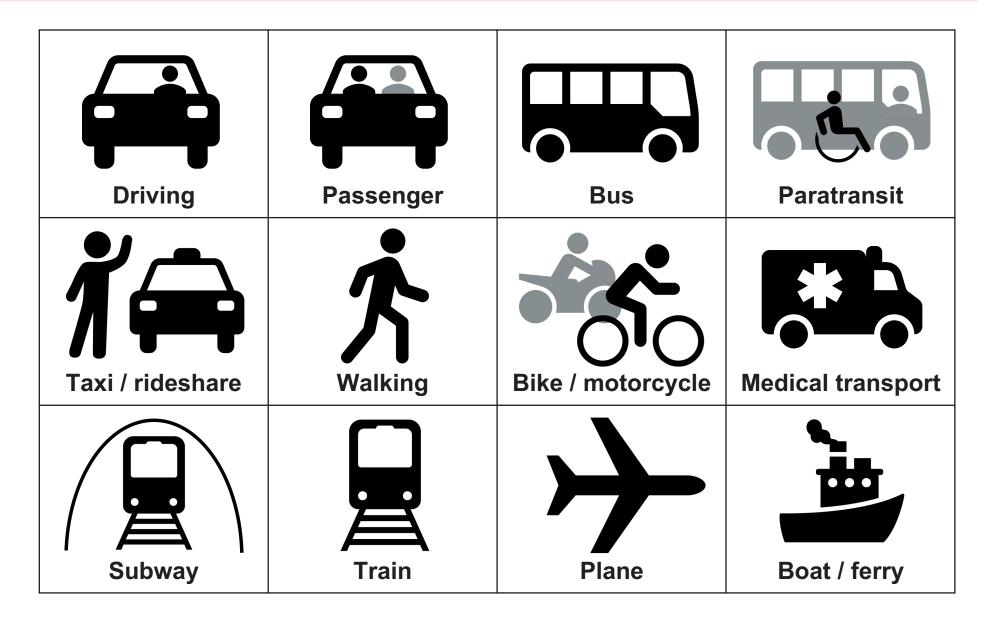
#### **Transfers and mobility**







## **Transportation**

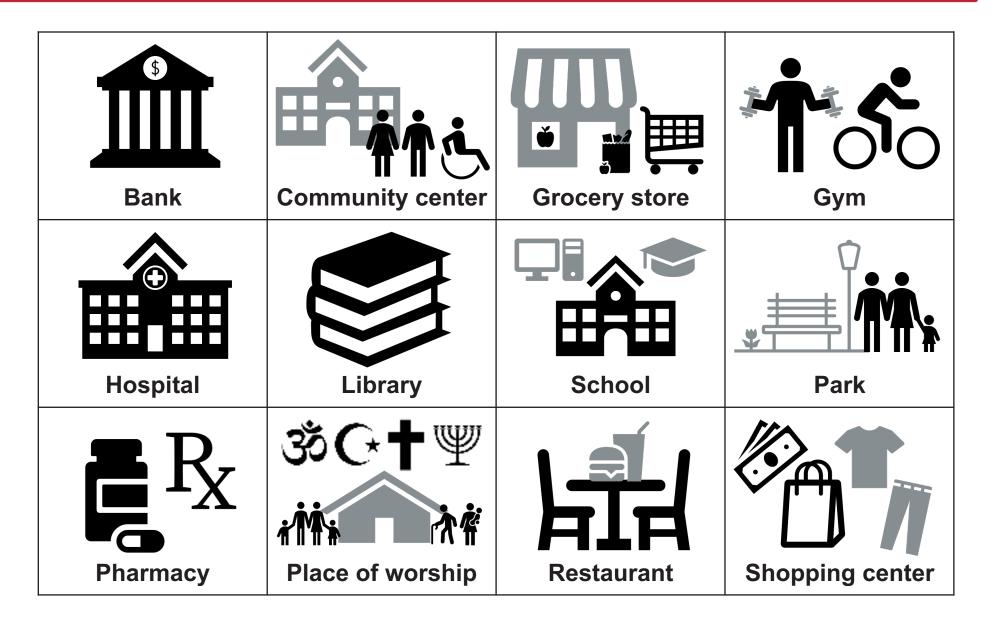


ABC... I will spell



Not on this board

## **Community locations**







## My hobbies







# Spelling boards

	1		2		3		4 5		5	6		7		8		9		0	
Q		V	V	Ш		F	RT				<b>/</b>	U				C		P	
	A			<b>S C</b>			F		G		ŀ	┨,		JK					
·	Z		<b>&gt;</b>		C		1	/	E	3	N	1	N	1		•			
	Start over						Space							Back					
•	No						Maybe / I don't know						•	Yes					



	A	E	3	С	D	Spa	ace	Yes	
	Е	F		G	Η	Ва	ck	No	
	-	J	•	K	L	N	<b>1</b>	N	
	0	F		Q	R		3	Т	
	U	V		W	X		1	Z	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
Start	over	End o	of me	essage	Mayk	Later			



