Student Nurse Externs: List of Do’s and Don’ts!

Build your professional reputation by displaying a positive and helpful attitude. Get along well with others, work hard and ask lots of questions to show your interest.

Extern Do’s:

- Accompany your nurse partner during first assessment of each patient and discuss plan of care and division of work for patients.
- Assist patients with AM care and make their beds.
- Run errands for the Charge Nurse to other parts of the hospital.
- Collect specimens; record and monitor intake and output.
- Assist with preoperative care.
- Distribute nourishment and fresh water (especially HS snacks for patients with diabetes).
- Perform postmortem care. Be sure your nurse partner instructs you how to do this.
- Participate in patient teaching under the guidance and direction of your nurse partner.
- If OK’d by your nurse partner you may pull the medications. (leave in packages) for a patient assigned to you, but do not administer. Your nurse partner will give all medication.
- Clean up and restock the carts, CSR room, desk, and conference room.
- Help check off orders. Knowing how will be tremendously helpful when you are a registered nurse.
- Stock the cubbies with gloves, isolation gowns, etc.
- Gather equipment for IV therapy.
As an extern you may also do the following:

• Check all rooms to see they are neat, and orderly.
• Clean off the bedside table.
• Put lotion on your patients with dry skin/heels
• Sit down and listen to your patient
• Read your patients chart
• Look up your patients disease process and medications
• Provide patient teaching (with guidance from nurse)
• May use the Learning for Life or other approved patient teaching materials.

Extern Do Not’s
Do not do the following actions and activities while participating in the Student Nurse Extern Program:

• Do not give any medications.
• Do not take Physicians’ verbal or telephone orders.
• Do not take lab alerts.
• Do not perform independently any procedure you have not previously performed or any procedure in which you have not been checked off
• Do not perform any sterile or invasive procedures.
• Do not initiate IV therapy, flush IV's, change IV fluid or tubing, reset IV infusion pumps, or discontinue IV therapy.
• Do not perform accuchecks.
• Do not administer or discontinue oxygen therapy.
• Do not perform the narcotic count.
• Do not carry the narcotic keys.
• Do not sign off orders in patient’s chart.
• Do not obtain patient consent signatures.
• Do not act as the primary care giver for an assigned group of patients.
• Do not bring homework or study while at work.
• Do not sit around for extended periods of time. There is always something constructive to do. Your reputation is growing—let it be good.

If you have any questions about the extern program, ask your clinical director or the coordinator of the Student Nurse Extern Program. We want your experience to be enriching and exciting.