

Tips for Using Comfort Bag Contents

- **Journal:** Use this to keep a daily diary of your thoughts, people who visit, how the journey is going for your family member or you—it will be so useful to help reconstruct this time in your injured family member's life as well as for you as stress can have an impact on memory. Daily journaling is also beneficial for your own mental well-being on this journey—use it to express your feelings, hopes and challenges.
- **Drawing Pad and Markers:** These are great to have so you can make signs to put on the door, draw pictures or inspirational words for the walls of the room and if there are children, for them to draw pictures to put up on the walls or just to occupy them while in the waiting room.
- **Bluetooth Speaker:** Music and the brain are so important. It is a way to soothe, stimulate or access memory. You can play classical music, recordings of family messages/voices, favorite songs, and guided meditations. Nature sounds are awesome too! I often thought of what my son might be taking in when lying in the hospital bed, in a coma, with nothing but the sounds of machines—for me this was an important link to keep him grounded in his life and to know that we were there.
- **Power Bank for Charging Phones and the Bluetooth Speaker:** In an emergency, whoever thinks to bring a charger? Family members often stay at the hospital for extended periods in critical situations—we want you to at least be able to charge your devices to make phone calls and to keep connected.
- **Little Book for Mindfulness:** Just a little nudge to help you BREATHE and keep grounded. Your family member needs you and you are under tremendous stress. It's a little thing but we hope it can help you find a way to breathe and relax to stay present and maybe a little less stressed.
- **3-ring Binder with Plastic Sleeves:** This is a useful item to keep the multitudes of paperwork, information and business cards you will receive all together so that you can access the information when you need to and don't have to hunt for it.
- **Thank You Note Cards:** These are nice to have to write small notes of gratitude in your down time at the hospital to anyone who has extended a kindness you appreciate.
- **Tetris Game:** When someone you love is in the ICU, your mind and body can feel like they are on constant alert. Tetris is included in this bag because simple visual puzzle games can help give the brain a brief place to rest. The shapes and patterns require focus, which may help quiet racing thoughts and offer a few moments of calm during long, stressful hours of waiting. It will not change what is happening, but it may give you a small pause, a breath, and a moment of relief when everything feels overwhelming.
- **Bubble Popper:** This offers a simple, quiet way to release anxious energy through the hands. The repeated pressing and popping can help with grounding, provide a small sensory distraction, and give the mind something steady to focus on during difficult waiting moments.
- **Adult Coloring Book and Colored Pencils:** This set is included to help reduce anxiety—coloring offers a simple, quiet activity for moments when the mind is overwhelmed.
- **\$25 Starbucks Gift Certificate:** No one comes prepared for emergencies—you can grab something to eat or drink without having to go too far—Starbucks is just a short walk from the hospital—so when you can take a break, get out and get some fresh air and something to nourish yourself.
- **Insulated Mug and Tea Bags:** Calming chamomile and chamomile blend teas included for your comfort. WE've washed the mugs for you so they are ready to use.