



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS


WHY DO WE USE COLOR-CODED WRISTBANDS?


Color-coded wristbands are used in care settings to quickly communicate a certain healthcare state, condition or an “alert” that a patient/resident/client may have. This is done so every staff member can provide the best care possible.


WHAT DO THE COLORS MEAN?

RED - ALLERGY Red means stop! Caregivers will be alerted to stop and check the medical record and will the patient/resident/client to confirm what the allergy risk. 

YELLOW - FALL RISK Yellow is a warning to slow down, pay attention and take special precautions. We want to prevent falls at all times. Nurses review patients/residents/clients all the time to determine if they need extra attention to prevent a fall. Sometimes a person may become weakened during an illness or because they just had surgery. When a patient/resident/client has this color-coded alert wristband, the nurse is saying that this person needs to be assisted when walking or transferring to help prevent a fall. 

GREEN - LATEX ALLERGY Green is the color of nature. Latex comes from the liquid in tropical rubber trees. We want to assure a safe environment for our patients/residents/clients, and it can be as simple as using latex-free products. 

PURPLE - DNR or DO NOT RESUSCITATE A survey indicated that most providers in New Jersey use purple to alert that there is a DNR on the chart. It is important that we honor a patient’s/resident’s/client’s wishes for end-of-life care. 

PINK - RESTRICTED LIMB Pink is being used across the country to designate that care givers should be aware of a restricted limb. Sometimes a patient’s/resident’s/client’s arm shouldn’t be used for taking a blood pressure reading, drawing blood or inserting an IV because they have a shunt, PICC line or other medical reason. This band tells us to double-check to be sure that we use the correct arm. 

DO WE STILL NEED TO LOOK IN THE CHART EVEN IF THERE IS A WRISTBAND?

Always check the chart! Wristbands are merely an alert. The patient’s status can change throughout their stay, and it is important to always refer to the chart for the most current risk designations.

**If providers, such as home health agencies and assisted living providers, do not use wristbands with their clients, we recommend the use of color coordinated charts, care plan and information stickers to designate risks.*



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