

The GUARD Method™

NURSING CARE TEMPLATE



GOAL

What are we trying to accomplish?

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

- What is the primary goal for this patient?
- What therapeutic outcome are we trying to achieve?
- What should improve or be maintained?
- Why is this intervention or medication being used?
- What does success look like for this patient?
- How will we know the goal has been met?



UNSAFE OUTCOMES

What could harm this patient?

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

- What are the potential or serious complications?
- What could cause the patient's condition to worsen?
- What are the adverse effects or side effects to watch for?
- What are the red flags or early warning signs?
- What situational or environmental factors could put the patient at risk?
- What requires immediate attention or intervention?



AFFECTING FACTORS

What changes the situation?

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

- What patient-specific factors could affect this situation?
- What comorbidities, age, or physiologic changes are present?
- What medications, food, or substance interactions could increase risk?
- What diagnostic findings or laboratory values are important?
- What lifestyle factors (e.g., diet, activity, smoking) could influence the outcome?
- What cultural, psychosocial, or economic factors should be considered?



RESULTS

What tells us what is actually happening?

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

- What key assessment findings should be monitored?
- Which vital signs are most important?
- What laboratory values or diagnostic test results are relevant?
- What trend are we seeing over time?
- What tells you the intervention is working or not working?
- What finding requires reassessment, communication, or escalation?



DO OR DON'T

What should the nurse do or not do?

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

- What should the nurse do next?
- What should the nurse avoid?
- What safety measures should be implemented?
- What patient education is needed?
- When should I hold, clarify, or question an order?
- When should I notify the provider or escalate care?
- What follow-up or reassessment is required?

