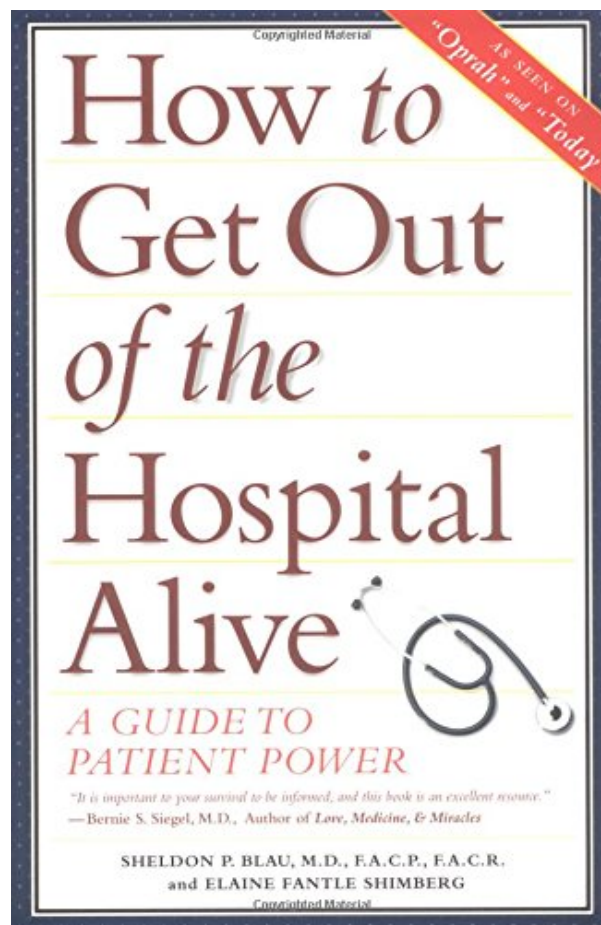
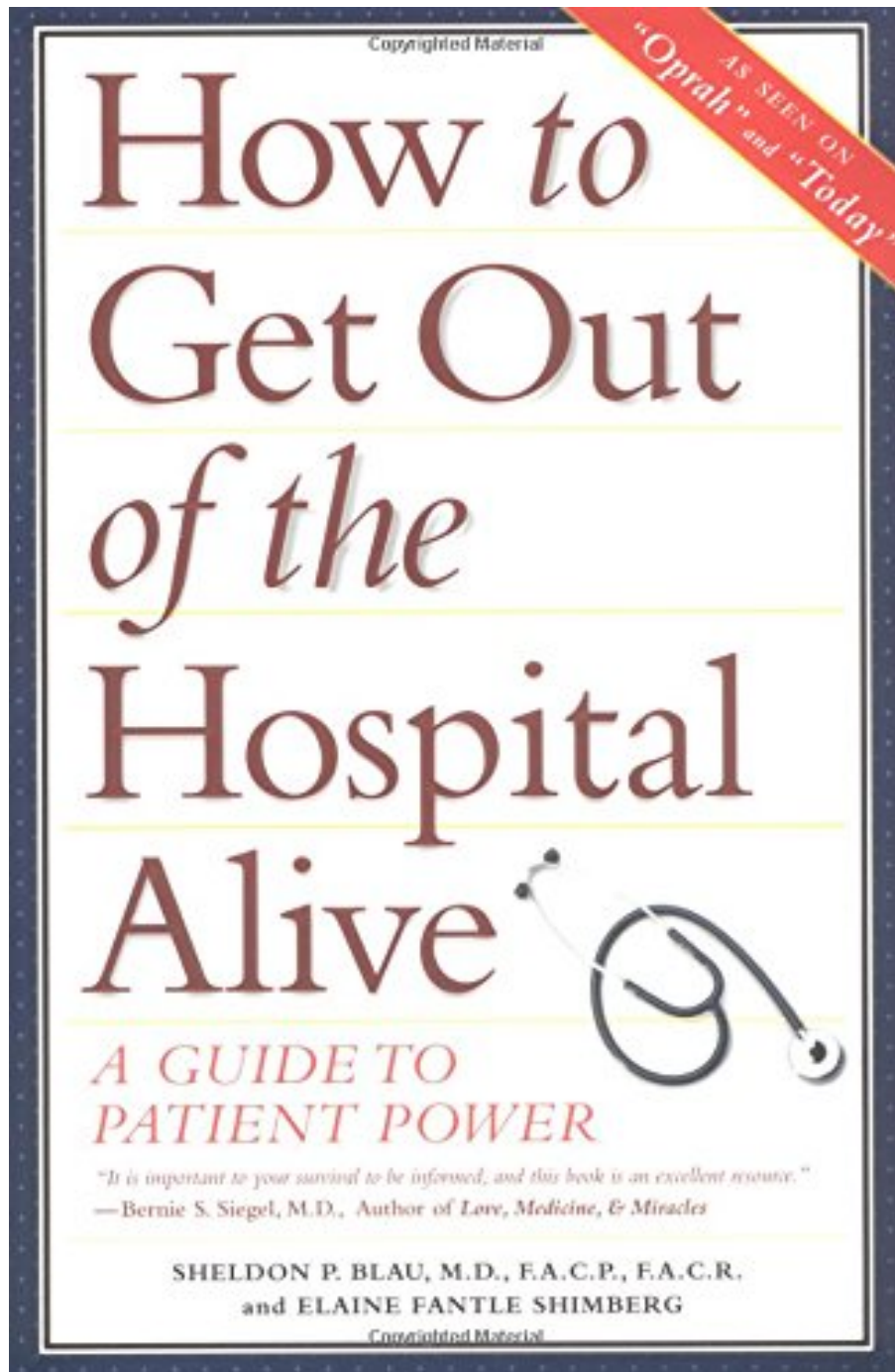


**HOW TO GET OUT OF THE HOSPITAL
ALIVE: A GUIDE TO PATIENT POWER BY
SHELDON P. BLAU**



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Amazon.com Review

The title is scary enough--wait until you get to the part where Blau, a clinical professor of medicine at SUNY Stony Brook, and health writer Shimberg reveal that 180,000 Americans die of preventable medical mistakes each year. What's more, 5 to 10 percent of hospitalized patients will acquire an infection they didn't have before, while 6.5 percent will have a bad reaction to drugs. But there's a lot you can do to make your stay safer, the authors say, from getting to know the layout of the hospital and its staff to making sure anyone who examines you washes his or her hands first. Hospitals can seem like strange, harrowing places, especially when you're sick enough to need to be in one. This vital book not only arms patients with the insider tips they need to improve the quality of their care, it also will help people understand what actually goes on in hospitals--something that patients will find comforting and E.R. fans will find fascinating.

From the Back Cover

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15 of 15 people found the following review helpful.

Great stuff - this is just the beginning - we want more.

By A Customer

...Sheldon Blau's introduction confirms your worst fears - firstly, that things can and do go wrong, and secondly, that it is reasonably easy to fix it - if you know what is wrong. I read this book after having to fight medical personal for four days to take notice when we said there was something seriously wrong with our son, who was bleeding internally. When we finally got to hospital, I had a fair idea what was wrong with him, and tried to negotiate a way to sort it out. But there was one big difference between me and Sheldon Blau. I was just a mother. In the end, I was proven right, but not before a whole raft of "situations" became majors, with me having to step in twice, saying over my dead body. The things that really struck me about Sheldon Blau's comments was that he could not address the one thing he did not feel, which was intimidation, and resultant fear of authority, because as a doctor he had "authority". The major hurdle for parents was not one he had to face. As parents, when you believe you are right, and doctors are wrong, the first thing that hits you is fear. And sure enough, the first question you will be asked, when you question authority, is "What medical school did you go to?". Then the tactics start, to attempt to have you removed from the hospital, and subtle things to make your "life" while you try to protect your child hell. Intimidation in a big scale. None of these things Sheldon Blau experienced, because it was not done to him. They wouldn't dare. I rated the book five, because on the mechanical things that you need to do, this book is the best I've read. But what happens when you switch on a tape-recorder in hospital? It might be tolerated (barely) if you are a medical person - but as a parent it is interpreted as a threat, and instantly, the way you

are treated and viewed changes. In some cases, management then becomes "aggressive".

So when I titled my review "This is just the beginning" , I meant that I would like Elain Shimberg and Sheldon Blau to follow up by writing a book about coping strategies for parents to survive all the things which are never done to medical patients. It is so desperately needed.

Another issue unresolved is that most people who do fight, are educated and articulate. We were. We won - and we probably saved our son's life by preventing dangerous treatment he didn't need, and stopping them giving a drug intravenously when it should have been given orally. But I couldn't help thinking as I looked around the ward at all the other mothers who had no assertiveness, no knowledge, no realisation that the medical library was just 200 yards down the corridor - that for their children, if anything went wrong and their child died, the standard answer would be "we did our best" when in fact far from being heroes, the medical people had silently buried their mistakes.

This book is fantastic for educated assertive people - and possibly useful for others. There is still a crying need however, to address the plight of the average Ewen Mee who hasn't a clue how to fight, because they deserve a lot better than they are dished up with at the moment.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

Sensationalist Title But Good Information

By Courtney L. Lewis

Despite this sensationalist title, Blau and Shimberg have written an excellent resource for anyone contemplating surgery or a hospital stay of any duration. Most enlightening (and frightening) was the chapter dedicated to infection control issues - it's amazing how often overworked hospital staff ignore basic hygiene and universal precautions in an effort to get all their work done. The authors give examples of lots of good questions to ask (and direct you to the risk management department of the hospital - not the public relations office). The book also breaks down the hospital bureaucracy so I came away with an excellent understanding of how all the parts of this large "machine" interact with one another. Blau and Shimberg have devoted a good amount of space to the issues of patient rights and insurance concerns which will probably affect anyone having to deal with the paperwork aftermath of a hospital stay. Peppered with anecdotes (some funny, some scary), this book is an excellent resource and should be recommended reading for anyone evaluating such a facility.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

Depth and Insight from a Medical Professional

By A Customer

As a long term patient of Dr. Blau's it has become apparent that he gained a depth and insight into what it means to be a patient thru his pre and post hospital experience. Insightful, and spoken from a heartfelt and practical perspective.

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