

Preparing for Your Surgery

Getting started

A surgery nurse will call you to review your health history and instructions. They will give you an arrival time based on your scheduled surgery time.

Please be ready to share the following:

- Your doctor's clinic name and phone number
- Your medical, surgical and anesthesia history
- A list of allergies and sensitivities
- A list of medicines, including herbal treatments and over-the-counter drugs
- Whether the patient has a legal guardian (ask how to send us the papers in advance)

If your child is having surgery, please ask for a copy of [Preparing for Your Child's Surgery](#).

Preparing for surgery

- Within 30 days of surgery: Have an exam at your family clinic (primary care clinic), or go to a pre-operative clinic. This exam is called a "History and Physical," or H&P.
- At your H&P exam, **talk to your care team about all medicines you take**. If you need to stop any medicines before surgery, ask when to start taking them again.
 - We do this for your safety. Many medicines can make you bleed too much during surgery. Some change how well surgery (anesthesia) drugs work.
- Call your insurance company to see what it will and won't pay for. Ask if they need to pre-approve the surgery. (If no insurance, call 612-672-2000.)
- Call your surgeon's clinic if there's any change in your health. This includes signs of a cold or flu (sore throat, runny nose, cough, rash, fever). It also includes a scrape or scratch near the surgery site.
- If you have questions on the day of surgery, call your surgery center.

Eating and drinking guidelines

For your safety: Unless your surgeon tells you otherwise, follow the guidelines below.

- Eat and drink as usual until **8 hours** before surgery. After that, no food or milk.
- Drink clear liquids until **2 hours** before surgery. These are liquids you can see through, like water, Gatorade and Propel Water. You may also have black coffee and tea (no cream or milk).
- Nothing by mouth within **2 hours** of surgery. This includes gum, candy and breath mints.
- Stop alcohol the midnight before surgery.
- If your family clinic tells you to take medicine on the morning of surgery, it's okay to take it with a sip of water.

(over)

Preventing infection

- Shower or bathe the night before **and** morning of your surgery. Follow the instructions your clinic gave you. (If no instructions, use regular soap.)
- Don't shave or clip hair near your surgery site. This can lead to skin infection.
- **Don't smoke** the morning of surgery. Smoking increases the risk of infection. You may chew nicotine gum up to 2 hours before surgery. A nicotine patch is okay.
 - Note: Some surgeries require you to completely quit smoking and nicotine. Check with your surgeon.
- Your care team will make every effort to keep you safe from infection. We will:
 - Clean our hands often with soap and water (or an alcohol-based hand rub).
 - Clean the skin at your surgery site with a special soap that kills germs. We'll also remove hair from the site as needed.
 - Wear special hair covers, masks, gowns and gloves during surgery.
 - Give antibiotic medicine, if prescribed. Not all surgeries need antibiotics.

What to bring on the day of surgery

- Photo ID and insurance card
- Copy of your [health care directive](#), if you have one
- Glasses and hearing aides (bring cases)
 - You can't wear contacts during surgery
- Inhaler and eye drops, if you use them (tell us about these when you arrive)
- CPAP machine or breathing device, if you use them
- A few personal items, if spending the night
- If you have . . .
 - A pacemaker or ICD (cardiac defibrillator): Bring the ID card.
 - An implanted stimulator: Bring the remote control.
 - A legal guardian: Bring a copy of the certified (court-stamped) guardianship papers.

Please **remove** any jewelry, including body piercings. Leave jewelry and other valuables at home.

If you're going home the day of surgery

Important: If you don't follow the rules below, we must cancel your surgery.

- Arrange for someone to drive you home after surgery. You may not drive, take a taxi or take public transportation by yourself (unless you'll have local anesthesia only).
- Arrange for a responsible adult to stay with you overnight. If you don't, we may keep you in the hospital overnight, and you may need to pay the costs yourself.

Questions?

If you have any questions for your care team, list them here: _____

FIIRO GAAR AH: Hadii aad ku hadasho Soomaali, waaxda luqadaha, qaybta kaalmada adeegyada, waxay idiin hayaan adeeg kharash la'aan ah. So wac 612-273-3780.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 612-273-3780.

We comply with applicable federal civil rights laws and Minnesota laws. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity.