Before and After Day Surgery: Hants Community Hospital
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Hants Community Hospital

Welcome
This booklet will help you learn about your care before and after day surgery.

A day surgery patient will:
• Come to the hospital on the day of his/her surgery
• Have surgery done in the Operating Room (OR)
• Return home after surgery

Date of surgery _________________________
Time of surgery _________________________

Your surgery may be cancelled if you are late.
Delays in the OR may cause a change in your surgery.
There is a chance that your surgery could be cancelled if there is an emergency. If this happens, your surgeon’s office will call you with a new date.
You may need some tests before your surgery. This will depend on your general health or the type of surgery you are having. You will be called if testing is needed.
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*Your surgery could be delayed if you do not have these tests done.*

**Getting ready for surgery**

Please bring to the hospital your:

- Hospital card
- Provincial Health Card
- Medications in their original containers

Bring any walking aids (crutches, canes, braces) that you have been told you will need.

You may take your medications as usual with sips of water. If you are unsure of what to take, check with your surgeon.

A regional anesthetic means an area of your body is frozen. You’ll usually be sedated (get medicine to calm you). With a general anesthetic, you will get medication to put you to sleep for your surgery.
If you are having a general anesthetic, local anesthetic, or regional anesthetic:

- Do not eat any solid food after midnight the night before your surgery.
- Do not drink any fluids after midnight.
- You will be asked to report to the hospital 2 hours before your surgery.
- After surgery, you need a responsible adult to take you home and to stay with you to take care of you as required.

After a general anesthetic, regional anesthetic, or intravenous (IV) sedation:

For 24 hours DO NOT:
- Operate heavy machinery
- Sign legal documents
- Drive a car
- Drink alcohol
Health and hygiene

• Please call your surgeon before coming to the hospital if you have a fever, cold, or flu-like symptoms.
• A good night’s rest before surgery is important.
• Take a complete bath or shower, and wash your hair the evening before or the morning of surgery.
• Capital Health is scent-free. Please do not wear perfumed products.

Medications

If you take medications, please bring them with you. Tell the nurse that you have your medications with you in their original containers. Let your surgeon know if you are taking “over the counter” medications and/or herbal products. It is very important to tell your surgeon at least 1 week before your surgery if you are taking Aspirin® (ASA) or blood thinners. These medications may need to be stopped before your surgery.
Smoking
Do not smoke after your evening meal, the night before surgery. Smoking can cause more secretions in your lungs, and you could have problems with your breathing. Capital Health is smoke-free.

Food and drink
• Eat at least 3 good meals the day before surgery and have a bedtime snack.
• Healthy eating promotes quicker healing.
• Do not drink alcohol for 48 hours before your surgery.

Dentures
You may wear your dentures to the hospital. Just before you go the Operating Room (OR), they will be taken out and put in a denture cup until after surgery. If you have permanent bridges, caps, crowns, or loose teeth, please tell your nurse.
Glasses/contact lenses
Bring a case to store your glasses when they are not being used. Your glasses will be taken from you just before you go to the OR. They will be given back to you in the recovery area. If you have contact lenses, it is best if you wear your glasses. If this is not possible, please bring your lens container and cleaning solutions. Remember to tell your nurse you are wearing contact lenses. They must be taken out before you go to the OR.

Hearing aids
If you wear a hearing aid, bring it and a storage case with you. Depending upon how much hearing loss you have, you may be allowed to wear it to the OR. It will be returned to you in the recovery area after your surgery.

Valuables
Leave all valuables (jewelry, money, credit cards, cheque books) at home. The hospital is not responsible for lost items.

All jewelry including toe rings must be taken out at home. Any item used to pierce a body part such as the nose, belly button, tongue, or ear must be taken out.
Getting prepared for surgery in the same day surgery unit

• Staff will do a short nursing assessment with you. Staff will review information about your surgery with you.

• You will be asked to put on a johnny shirt, dressing gown, and slippers.

• Your clothes and other belongings will be marked and placed in a locker.

• You will have a wait before going to the OR. Just before leaving for the OR, you will be asked to remove your dentures and eyeglasses.

Surgery

The operating room

• An OR staff member will take you to the OR.

• On arrival, you will be greeted by a nurse who will ask you several questions. This is to meet patient safety standards.

• The staff will be wearing masks, caps, and special green clothing to keep the area clean.

• The OR is usually cool. You will get a warm blanket.

• The staff will help you move to an OR bed. A belt, similar to a car seat belt, will go around you to ensure your safety.
If you are having a general anesthetic:

• You will have an intravenous (IV) started before you go to sleep.

• 3 white disks will be applied to your chest and shoulder. This allows the anesthetist to check your heart rate while you are under anesthesia.

• Depending on the procedure, a larger pad may be placed on your leg, back, or shoulder. This is a grounding pad, and is another safety measure.

• A clothespin-like device, called an Oximeter Probe, may be attached to your finger. It will help the anesthetist to measure your oxygen levels during surgery.

• Your surgeon and anesthetist will talk with you just before your anesthesia.

Waiting room

A waiting area is available for a relative/friend while you are in surgery/recovery.
After surgery

You will be taken to a special recovery area called the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). Most patients recover from their anesthetic in this area.

The nurses are waiting for you, and they will frequently check your:

• Blood pressure and pulse
• Breathing
• Intravenous
• Dressings

They will also assess your level of discomfort/pain and give you medications as needed.

You may be sleepy, your mouth may be dry, and there may be a small plastic airway in place to help your breathing. You may get oxygen for a short time. The patches, placed on your chest for heart monitoring, may still be in place. The clothespin-like device attached to your finger may also be in place to measure your oxygen levels.

There may be a small amount of drainage on your dressings. Do not be alarmed as this often happens. Your nurse will watch this and call the surgeon if needed.

When you are more awake and comfortable, you will be taken to the post recovery area and prepared to go home.
Post recovery area
Instructions about your care at home will be reviewed with you. Staff will answer any questions you have. Your nurse will talk with you about the routines of your surgeon. Some of these instructions will include what type of activity you will be able to do when you return home (housework, lifting, driving), appointments for follow-up visits, and prescriptions if needed. You will change into your own clothes.

Deep breathing and coughing exercises
You will be expected to do deep breathing and coughing exercises that you practiced at home.
1. Take a deep breath in through your nose.
2. Hold your breath for 2 to 3 seconds, by counting 1, 2, 3.
3. Blow it out through your mouth.
4. Repeat this type of breathing in and out 6 or 7 times.
5. On your last breath in, hold it for a second and firmly cough. If you cough up any phlegm, repeat the exercise.

These exercises help keep your lungs clear and make your breathing easier.
The best time to do these exercises is about 20 minutes after you take your pain medication. When doing these exercises, hold a pillow over any abdominal incisions (cuts). This will help support your incision and ease any discomfort.
Foot and leg exercises
Exercising your feet and legs helps your blood to circulate better.

1. Point your toes downward towards the floor, relax your foot, and then point them upward to the ceiling. Relax.

2. Make circles with both ankles going to the right. Repeat the same going to the left. Relax.

3. Bend your knees up and down.

Don't do these exercises if your surgeon tells you not to.

It is not wise to stay in bed for a long time without moving your legs and feet. Do these exercises at least 5 times every hour.

Going home
If you are to going to be put to sleep (a general anesthetic) or have IV sedation, you must arrange for someone to drive you from the hospital. When you are ready for discharge, the staff will call this person. You will not be allowed to walk home or take public transit. We encourage you to have someone at home with you overnight to provide care as needed. If you have small children, arrange for someone to help you for a few days if necessary.

Bring loose-fitting clothing, such as a sweat suit and comfortable shoes to wear home. Anything that fits tightly may cause discomfort on your incision. They may be too tight to fit over casts or dressings.

We trust that this pamphlet has helped you.
Please use the space below to write down any questions you would like answered.
If you have any questions, please ask.
We are here to help you.