



Sturdy Health
Sturdy Memorial Hospital

Preparing for Surgery



**Tips for
Preparing for
Your Surgery Day**

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It is very important
that we have an
accurate phone number
to reach you.

If you are rarely at home,
please be sure that our office
has your cell phone number.



What to Expect Before Your Surgery Day

PHONE CALLS

Before your procedure, you will receive a call from the Patient Registration staff (Admissions Office). The surgeon's office may also call you about other visits that may be required, such as Physical Therapy or the Laboratory, or to notify you of any changes in scheduling. Please be sure our office has a phone number that can easily reach you.

PRE-ADMISSION TESTING

A nurse will call you from the Pre-Admission Testing Department to ask questions and discuss your upcoming surgical appointment. This call is part of an anesthesia screening process that will help us provide you with safe and efficient care. This call typically lasts between 45 and 60 minutes.

During that call, the interview nurse will take your health history, verify medications you currently take, and give instructions about eating, drinking, and the medications you may take the morning of surgery.

The following topics will be discussed during the call.

- ✓ **Medications** – Please have all your medication bottles readily available for verification of the name, dose, and other details.
- ✓ **The name and office number of your primary care provider and any specialists you see.** Please have this information available for reference during the call.
- ✓ **Testing you may need** based on your history and health
- ✓ **Verification of the anesthesia questionnaire** completed at the surgeon's office
- ✓ **An overview of the surgical procedure** and what to expect
- ✓ **Diabetic patients and those on weight loss medications** will receive specific instructions on managing blood sugars and medications as the surgical day approaches.
- ✓ **Equipment you might need** or challenges getting into your home (i.e., 2nd or 3rd floor)
- ✓ **If the patient is a minor, under age 18**, then a parent or guardian must accompany them to the hospital.
- ✓ **Questions you may have** about preparing for surgery, the surgery day, or after surgery



Pre-Operative Instructions

The following instructions are very important to follow in preparation for your procedure or surgery:

1. **Do not eat anything after midnight before your surgery day.** (This includes not eating candy, cough drops, chewing gum, mints, or antacids after midnight). If the interview nurse tells you to, take your medications with a sip of water only.
2. **The nurse will inform you of the time until which you may drink clear liquids** (i.e., water, black coffee, or tea).
3. **The evening before your surgery day, eat a light meal. Do not drink alcohol.**
4. **The night before and morning of surgery,** if you were given a skin cleansing solution you will wash according to the instructions provided by your provider's office. This product is used from the neck down, avoiding the face, eyes, ears, and genital area.
5. **Tell your nurse and anesthesiologist about any medical conditions and any medications you take,** including aspirin, other "over-the-counter" medications, and herbal supplements.
6. **Make arrangements for a responsible adult to pick you up after your procedure to drive you home.** You may not drive yourself home from the hospital, as medications given during surgery will make it unsafe for you to drive.
7. **We recommend that someone stay with you following your surgery and throughout the night.**
8. **Do not wear nail polish or makeup on the surgery day.** The natural color of your nails is a sign of your overall health.
9. **Do not wear any jewelry, piercings, or jewelry that is unremovable.** Wearing jewelry may cause a delay in preparing you for your surgery, and the surgery may be canceled if the jewelry cannot be removed. If you need assistance with removing any jewelry, it is recommended that you see either a jeweler or the venue where you purchased the jewelry.
10. **You may have one support person with you in the pre-operative area.** Only one person is permitted due to privacy concerns for all surgical day care patients. Young children are not allowed in the pre-operative area and should not be left unattended in the waiting area.
11. **If you receive any form of anesthesia, you will spend some time in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU).** We will contact the person who will be driving you home when you are ready for discharge.
12. **We recognize there are guide dogs and service animals that may accompany you or your support person as part of your daily routines.** The Department of Surgery is a restricted area. No animals are permitted beyond the waiting room.
13. **If you might be pregnant, please inform your nurse and anesthesiologist.** Some medications could be harmful to a developing fetus. Pregnancy could also cause certain reactions to anesthetic medications.
14. **Smoking is not permitted on hospital property.** Patients who smoke are urged to stop at least two weeks before their procedure.
15. **A Health Care Proxy needs to be attached to your chart during your hospitalization.** This legal document form is available through the Patient Registration/Admissions Department. Please make sure the proxy is dated and signed by a witness. If you have a Health Care Proxy or Medical Power of Attorney, please provide the most updated version of that document. This will be scanned into your Electronic Healthcare Record.
16. **A planned time of your arrival will be communicated to you by way of a phone call, after 2 p.m. on the business day prior to your surgery.** If you do not answer the call, a voice message will be left for you (please make sure your voicemail can receive messages).

If you have any questions or concerns, please share them with the nurses, anesthesiologist, and/or surgeon before proceeding with the surgery.



The Day of Surgery

Your Safety is Our Priority

To help keep you safe, our staff will ask you some of the same questions multiple times—like your name and date of birth—and confirm key details about your procedure. This is a standard and important part of our safety process.

- + As your surgical date nears, you will receive an automated text, phone call, or email reminding you of your upcoming appointment.
- + Remember to bring a **picture ID** and your **insurance card** with you.
- + Please check in at the Surgical Day Care desk on the first floor of the hospital at the time you were instructed to arrive. To access Surgical Day Care, enter through the main lobby or the Emergency Room, where staff will direct you.
- + On the day of surgery, please tell your nurse about **dentures, partials, capped, or loose teeth**, or other prostheses. If you wear **glasses** to read, please bring them along with your case since you will be required to sign papers. Your glasses will be maintained with your clothing prior to going to the operating room. In most cases, **contact lenses must be removed** (even “extended wear”). If you are having anesthesia, please bring your lens case and any necessary solutions with you.
- + If you wear **hearing aids**, please wear them. Hearing aids will be removed in the pre-operative area, and secured with your clothing just prior to going into surgery.
- + A **locker** will be provided for your clothing. Please leave money, jewelry, and other valuables at home. Sturdy Memorial Hospital will not be responsible for any items lost.
- + You may wish to **bring a book** to read if there is a delay in the scheduled time of surgery.
- + **Wear loose-fitting clothing** that is easy to put on and take off. Elastic waist pants and sweat suits are examples of appropriate clothing. If surgery involves hand/arm or leg/foot, please wear clothing loose enough to fit over a large dressing. A top that zips or buttons up the front may be easier to put on after your procedure.

- + **Surgical times are approximate** and subject to change for various reasons. If there is a change with the schedule on the day of the surgery, someone from the operating room staff will call you. The surgeon’s office will manage any other schedule changes.
- + During registration, you can **specify one person to receive text message updates** about your location as you move through the pre-operative, operating room, and post-operative stages of your care. Please have the cell phone number ready. The designated person will get an initial text asking for their consent to the service, and if they agree, they should follow the prompts.
- + A nurse will bring you in and start your preparation by checking your vital signs. If you wear dentures or contact lenses, you will be asked to remove them. An IV (intravenous) may be placed to give you fluids. Medications may be needed as part of your preparation; if so, they will be administered.
- + If you have brought a support person with you, they will be asked to wait in the Pre-Operative waiting area until you have had the opportunity to privately change into a hospital gown. Once you are settled, they will be brought in to sit with you.
- + When the Operating Room is ready for you, a team of nurses and doctors will escort you there. Your family member will be directed to the waiting room, located adjacent to the Surgical Day Care check-in desk.

Family members
are welcome to visit
Sturdy Memorial Hospital’s
cafeteria and chapel, located on
the ground level. Cell phone usage
is restricted to public areas such as
the main lobby, cafeteria, or outside
the hospital.



After Surgery

- + After your surgery is completed, the surgical team will bring you to the recovery area.
- + During your recovery, you'll receive fluids through your IV until you're able to take fluids by mouth. The nursing staff will monitor your heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing, while also making you as comfortable as possible.
- + The nursing staff will assess your post-operative pain level. To accurately understand your pain, we use a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means no pain and 10 signifies the worst pain you've ever had. We aim to make you as comfortable as possible.
- + The doctor will speak with you after the surgery. Due to the medications you receive during surgery you may not remember talking to the doctor.
- + Once you are fully awake and meet our discharge criteria, the nursing staff will begin preparing you for discharge to home or admission to the hospital, if applicable.



Going home

- + A responsible adult should drive you home. If you prefer to use Uber, Lyft, or Taxi to be transported home, a responsible adult (other than the driver) must accompany you to your destination.
- + Your recovery period continues at home. Once you're home, you might still feel drowsy and experience some discomfort.
- + Your discharge nurse will give you verbal instructions after your surgery. We will also provide you with written post-operative instructions in an envelope labeled "DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS".

Please follow your Discharge Instructions carefully.

During the first few days after surgery, these instructions will help you take care of yourself and assist your family in caring for you.

- + It is very important that you follow your discharge instructions, especially those related to your activity level and taking your pain medications.
- + Any questions related to discharge instructions can be clarified by calling your surgeon's office.
- + Be sure to keep all follow-up appointments with your doctor
- + Rest! Your body needs to rest to heal.
- + You should not drink alcohol, drive or make important decisions for 24 hours.
- + A member of our staff will call you in the days following your procedure.

Tips for Preparing for Your Surgery Day

- ✓ **Do not eat or drink after midnight** before your surgery unless told otherwise by your nurse.
- ✓ **Take only approved medications** the morning of surgery with a sip of water.
- ✓ **Wear loose, comfortable clothing** that's easy to remove and put on.
- ✓ **Remove all jewelry, makeup, and nail polish** before arriving.
- ✓ **Have medication bottles and a list of your doctors** available during your pre-op call.
- ✓ **Arrange for a responsible adult** to drive you home and stay with you afterward.
- ✓ **Provide a working phone number** and ensure voicemail is set up to receive updates.
- ✓ **Do not smoke or drink alcohol** the day before or the day of your surgery.
- ✓ **Leave valuables at home.** A locker will be provided for clothing only.
- ✓ **Follow your Discharge Instructions carefully** to support your recovery at home.

For questions about the surgery day,
please call **(508) 236-7440**





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