Surgery: A Guide for You and Your Visitors

Your surgery day is very important—to you and to us. This guide will help you and your loved ones understand what to expect throughout the day. We encourage you to ask any of our staff if you need help or have any questions.

Once You Arrive
- You arrived 2 hours before your surgery time. If you have concerns about your wait time here, please see the staff in the Surgical Family Waiting Lounge.
- A responsible adult must take you home. This person must be here during your surgery to get updates.
- You may not eat, drink or chew anything until surgery.
- Please leave your valuables and personal belongings (jewelry, body piercings, wallet, purse, glasses, dentures, hearing aids and electronic devices) with someone you trust.
- Please identify one person for us to talk to before, during and after surgery. This person can update other friends and family.

Preparing for Surgery
In the Surgical Admissions Suite (SAS), we will prepare you for surgery. Everything that happens here is for your safety and comfort.

We wash our hands carefully to prevent infections. Anyone, including visitors, must cleanse their hands before and after patient contact.

We take a “time out” to confirm:
- your name, date of birth and place an ID band on your wrist or ankle;
- consent for the procedure;
- the type and location of your planned surgery or procedure.

The nurse will take your vital signs, review your health history and complete/review surgical instructions. We will start an intravenous line in your arm. This is how you will get medications and fluids during your surgery. Your anesthesiologist may offer an additional procedure (such as nerve block or epidural catheter) to help with pain after surgery.

In the Operating Room
- Once in the operating room (OR), your surgical team will transfer you to the surgical table and stay with you to keep you safe and comfortable at all times.
- During this time, your only job will be to relax. We want to make sure everything is in place so we may need up to an hour to prepare.
- You may find the OR environment feels cool; this is the best temperature for surgery. If you feel cold, please just ask us for additional blankets.
• We will update your loved ones at the start of your surgery, every 2-3 hours during surgery and at the end of surgery.
• Most of the time, you will travel from the OR to the recovery room and then to your room on a stretcher. Our staff will help you move between stretcher and bed.

**IN THE RECOVERY ROOM**
In most cases, patients will wake up in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). Expect to be in the PACU for at least 2 hours. To keep you comfortable, we may give you pain medicine and any other treatments if needed. You may be asked to take deep breaths and cough. This is a normal part of the recovery process.

**AFTER SURGERY**
□ If you are going to a hospital room after recovery, your PACU nurse will talk with your loved ones. Our Patient Handbook gives information about our hospital and services.

□ If you are going home today:
• You will be taken back to Surgical Admission Suite to get ready to go home.
• You may be sleepy or dizzy so you must have a responsible adult driver to take you home.
• Verbal and written instructions will be given to you and adults with you. Please follow these instructions carefully. Let us know if you have questions or concerns.
• Please fill out a comment card to let us know how we did and if there is anything we can improve.

**WHAT VISITORS NEED TO KNOW**
• Your support is an important part of your loved one’s care. It is best to stay in the Surgical Family Waiting Lounge so you don’t miss important updates.
• A large monitor in the Surgical Family Waiting Lounge allows you to track the surgical process. Just match your loved one’s patient tracking number to the assigned OR room and the color-coded system will indicate the patient’s status.
• If you wait elsewhere, you may miss updates. The lounge receptionist will gladly take a message for you. Just make sure to ask if you have any messages when you return.
• Out of respect for the fasting patients, please do not eat while in the lounge. Any of our staff will be happy to help you find our cafeteria, coffee stand, vending machine, ATM or gift shop—all close to the lounge.
• Two visitors per patient are welcome in the Surgical Family Waiting Lounge. Additional visitors will find comfortable seating in our hospital lobby. For fire safety reasons, we ask that you do not move the furniture.
• When you are ready to go up to visit a patient, you must go to the Information Desk for a Visitor pass.
• The receptionist will be happy to validate your parking ticket.