

Patient's guide to surgery

Surgery date: _____

Time for arrival will be given a day before surgery

Please make a pre-operative appointment at the hospital. Remember to take the preoperative paperwork with you to the appointment. You will be registered and your physician may have ordered blood tests to be drawn at the hospital.

Having surgery can be a stressful experience. This guide will hopefully answer many of your questions and help you during your recovery.

Preparing for surgery:

Diet: Eat a balanced diet with good sources of proteins and vegetables.

Hygiene:

- Wash with antibacterial soap when you shower or bathe.
- Your physician may recommend an antibacterial soap or chlorhexidine wipes before surgery.
- Do not shave the hair near your operative site before surgery.

Medications:

Please discontinue the following products **4 weeks** prior to surgery:

- Nicotine (smoking, chewing, hookah) - nicotine and other additives in tobacco products are very harmful to your lungs and block wound healing after surgery. Please quit 4 weeks prior to surgery, and do not resume after your surgery.
- Oral contraceptives (birth control) or hormone replacement therapy (HRT) – please notify your physician if you are taking these medications, he/she may have you stop them prior to surgery.

Please discontinue the following products **1 week** prior to surgery:

- NSAIDs (aleve, Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Diclofenac)
- Aspirin
- Herbal products (Probiotics are okay)

- Blood thinners (Coumadin, Warfarin, Plavix, Eliquis, Xarelto)
 - If you are taking blood thinners please notify your physician immediately. Your surgeon will need to speak with your cardiologist or PCP on when to safely stop this medication before surgery and when to restart it after surgery. Do **NOT** stop these medications before discussing with your primary care provider.
- Tylenol, antidepressants, blood pressure, and thyroid medications medications are okay to take up until the day of surgery, including the morning of surgery (with a SIP of water).

Diabetic patients:

- Discuss with your surgeon regarding your oral medication and/or insulin. Your physician may have you stop your oral medication one day prior to surgery, and/or may decrease your insulin the night prior to surgery.
- Diabetic medication should be restarted immediately after surgery to help control your blood sugar.
- Good blood sugar control is key to avoiding complications after surgery.

Day before surgery:

- Avoid strenuous exercise.
- Eat bland food, drink water and stay hydrated.
- Notify your physician of a fever greater than 100.4 or flu-like symptoms.
- **NOTHING to eat or drink for 8 hours prior to surgery**
- Your physician may recommend a bowel prep the night before surgery.

Day of surgery:

- **NOTHING to eat or drink for 8 hours prior to surgery**
 - If you take blood pressure or thyroid medication, you may take these with a SIP of water.
- Wear loose comfortable clothing. No jewelry, contact lenses, or make up.
- You will see your physician on the morning of surgery. Any last minute questions or concerns can be addressed at this time.

What you can expect from surgery & planning your first evening:

- Stay length: Most patients receiving robotic or laparoscopic surgery can be discharged home the same day. Sometimes, patients stay one night in the

hospital if they have medical conditions, like heart problems or poorly controlled diabetes.

- Please plan to have a **driver** after surgery to take you home. You will also need someone to stay with you on the first evening while anesthesia is wearing off.
- **Pain control:** you will receive high-dose ibuprofen and a narcotic medication. Please take the ibuprofen around the clock for the first few days after surgery (unless you have a medical reason and cannot take NSAIDs). Narcotic medication will also be provided to you. You may need to take the narcotic around-the-clock for the first few days after surgery. Once your pain improves, take narcotic medication only as needed.
- After laparoscopic or robotic surgery you may also feel pain in your shoulders and/or neck. This pain usually resolves in 24 to 48 hours. If the pain is severe, please contact your physician.
- Stool softener may also be prescribed to help avoid opioid-induced constipation.

At home recovery:

- Our surgery schedulers will schedule a postoperative visit, typically 7 to 10 days after your surgery.
- You may return to a normal diet after surgery. Start with clear liquids or bland food and add to your diet. Greasy food may cause nausea.
- Do not fly immediately after surgery. If you are traveling a long distance home or need to go on a long car ride, please get out of the car every 1.5 hours to walk and stretch your legs.

Activity:

- Ask others to help with chores and errands while you recover.
- Don't lift anything heavier than 10 pounds for 4 weeks or until cleared by your physician.
- Don't vacuum or do other strenuous activities until the doctor says it's okay.
- Walk as often as you feel able. Walking even if you are experiencing discomfort is important to help prevent pneumonia and blood clots.
- Climb stairs slowly and pause after every few steps.
- You may shower at home. Please keep your incisions clean and dry. Please do not soak your incisions, swim in swimming pools/Jacuzzis, or take baths until approved by your physician.

Vaginal restrictions after surgery:

- After hysterectomy or vaginal surgery, you have stitches at the top of the vagina. Please do not place anything in the vagina including tampons or intercourse for **6 weeks** or until instructed by your physician.

- Minor vaginal procedures like hysteroscopy – avoid tub baths, swimming, and intercourse for approximately **2 weeks**.
- You may experience vaginal discharge, watery discharge, or light vaginal spotting. Any heavy bleeding (soaking more than one pad per hour) warrants a call to your physician.

Incision Care:

- Band-Aids or gauze dressing sealed with plastic adhesive over your incisions may be removed after 24 hours.
- Your surgeon may use dermabond (looks like medical superglue) or Steri-Strips (look like rectangular-shaped paper tape)- do NOT remove these until instructed by your doctor. They will often fall off on their own.
- Please keep your incisions clean and dry. Please do not soak your incisions, swim in swimming pools/Jacuzzis, or take baths until approved by your physician.
 - Usually 6 weeks for hysterectomy
 - For other laparoscopic/robotic procedures – until your incisions have completely healed over.
- Do not use any lotions or powders on your incisions until approved.
- You may start to use silicone strips or scar gel once the incision has healed over completely and after all scabs have fallen off (usually 4 weeks).

Driving:

- Do NOT drive while taking narcotic medications. If you are pulled over for cause an accident while on narcotic medication, you will be charged with a DWI.
- Do not drive if you are still in pain. Theoretically, if you can slam on the brakes without wincing or holding your stomach in pain you can start to drive.

Call your doctor right away if you have any of the following:

- Fever above 100.4°F (38°C) or chills
- Bright red vaginal bleeding or vaginal bleeding that soaks more than one sanitary pad per hour
- A foul smelling discharge from the vagina
- Trouble urinating or burning when you urinate
- Severe pain or bloating in your abdomen
- Nausea/vomiting that does not improve
- Redness, swelling, or drainage at your incision sites
- Shortness of breath or chest pain

Narcotic pain medication

Q: Would you call in pain medication prescriptions to the pharmacy?

A: DEA regulations do not allow physicians to call in narcotic or anti-anxiety medications over the phone. A written prescription will be required. If you require more pain medication after your surgery, you will need to make an appointment with your physician for follow-up prior to receiving more narcotic medication to ensure you are healing properly and there are no complications.

Q: I lost my prescriptions, could I have a new one?

A: We are happy to provide you with prescriptions when necessary. Nevada law and the DEA require us to document if a prescription is lost or stolen. The state of Nevada also tracks any narcotic medication filled by a patient, and pharmacies may choose not to accept or fill prescriptions if they feel too many prescriptions have been filled in a short period of time.

If you have any other questions or concerns please feel free to contact your physician at 702-255-3547. We wish you a successful surgery and speedy recovery!