

Checklist for Surgery

Consent Forms/Insurance Information

The decision to have surgery is a very important one. You will need to be fully informed and prepared for the surgery, as well as for any special needs that you may have following the surgery. Your preparation will affect the outcome and the results. The following is a checklist to assist you in preparation for surgery.

- Make a list of questions to ask your physician/surgeon regarding the type of surgery recommendations.
- Determine if the surgical procedure is right for you.
- Obtain a second opinion, if desired.
- Check with your health plan regarding costs and coverages of the upcoming surgery.
- Obtain costs from physicians and hospital or outpatient facility.
- Schedule the surgery.
- Prepare lists of prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, herbal supplements, even illegal substances that you are currently taking (or have taken recently) for physicians: review with the anesthesiologist and surgeons.
- Schedule preoperative laboratory tests.
- Arrange for preoperative interview with the Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist.
- Follow all instructions during the weeks and days preceding surgery.
- Discontinue indicated prescriptions or over-the-counter medications and herbal supplements prior to surgery, as directed by your surgeon/physician.
- Arrange or necessary home care equipment, etc. following surgery.
- Sign all informed consent and other legal forms before surgery.
- Quit smoking to help in your recovery.

What is an informed consent form?

Prior to surgery, you will receive a careful explanation of the procedure, its purpose, any risks, and the expected outcome. You may also be asked to sign an “informed consent” form, which states in detail that you understand everything involved with your surgery. You should read through the consent carefully before signing it. If you have any question or need more information, ask your physician.

What are advance directives?

In certain surgeries where significant risks are involved, hospital staff may encourage you to prepare “advance directives.” Advance directives are legal documents that state a patient’s preference in treatment and resuscitation if the patient is unable to speak for himself/herself. There are two types of advance directives:

- **Living Will** – This document states a patient’s wishes in the withholding or withdrawing of life support if the patient suffers from an incurable and terminal condition.
- **Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare** – This document designates another person to make healthcare decisions if the patient is no longer able to make them. This designated person also has the power to make the final decision about cessation of treatment.

What about minors consent to medical care?

Parental consent is required for any diagnostic procedure or surgery on a pre-adolescent child. However, “emancipated” adolescents may consent to their own medical care. An emancipated adolescent is someone who meets the following criteria:

- Is married
- Attends college away from home
- Has a child
- Is in the military service

What happens when the adult patient cannot consent?

Sometimes an adult patient cannot make decisions (temporarily or permanently) about medical care, either because of accidental unconsciousness, confusion due to old age, or severe illness. In those instances a family member will be asked to make any necessary medical decisions.

Insurance Information:

After a patient is diagnosed and surgery is recommended, most insurance companies require “precertification” from the physician’s office before allowing a patient to undergo the procedure. Please check with you insurance carrier on the appropriate steps to take. Some insurance companies also require patients to pay a co-payment for the hospital stay.