

Notes:

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find all patient education resources here:
www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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Learn more: <https://library.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources>

Before and After Day Surgery

Your surgery will take place at:

Date: _____

Time: _____

Arrive by (time): _____

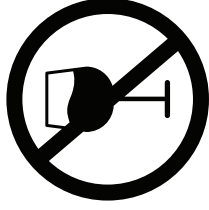
Questions for my health care team:

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For the first 24 hours after your surgery:

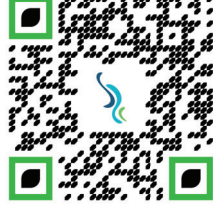
- › **Do not** drive a car or use heavy machinery. You must have a responsible adult drive you home from the hospital. **If you are taking a taxi or a bus, you must have a responsible adult with you.**
- › **Do not** drink alcohol.
- › **Do not** sign any legal documents or important papers.
- › **Do not** act as the primary caregiver for anyone (including children). Plan for someone to help you for a few days, if needed.
- › **Do not** drink alcohol while taking any pain medication (like narcotics).



Your appointment

- We will call you with a surgery date and time. If you do not hear from us or you are not able to keep your appointment, **call the centralized booking team for your area.**
- To find the phone number, scan the QR code below or visit:
 - › www.nshealth.ca/surgery/surgical-and-endoscopy-bookings

Scan the QR code below on your device (open the camera on your device, point the camera at the code, and tap the banner or border that appears)



- Your surgery may be cancelled if you are late.
- Call your surgeon's office if you have a fever (temperature above 38 °C or 100.4 °F), a cold, or flu-like symptoms (sore throat, runny nose, unexplained headache, trouble breathing), even if your symptoms are mild. Your surgery may need to be rescheduled.

- Delays in the O.R. may cause a change in your surgery time. There is a chance that your surgery may be cancelled if there is an emergency. If this happens, your surgeon's office will call you to book a new date.
- You may need tests before your surgery. This will depend on your overall health and the type of surgery you are having. Staff will call you to book these tests before your surgery, if needed.

2 weeks (14 days) before surgery:

- Smoking slows down your body's ability to heal. Stop smoking and vaping for 2 weeks before your surgery. If you are not able to do this, **do not smoke after your evening meal, the night before your surgery.** Smoking can cause more fluid in your lungs. This could cause breathing problems if you have anesthetic (medication that helps control pain) or sedation (medication used to put you to sleep before surgery) during your surgery.

1 week (7 days) before surgery:

- **Do not** shave your body in the area of your surgery. This helps to lower the risk of infection.

- The nurse will then help you get dressed in your loose-fitting clothing to go home.
- If you have questions about your surgery or your care at home, ask your health care team before you are discharged home.

At home

If you have questions or concerns about your anesthesia care after a general anesthetic, regional anesthetic, or intravenous (I.V.) sedation, call:

› Phone: _____

If you need help right away, call 811, or go to the nearest Emergency Department.

- The nurses will check your pain level. You may be asked to rate your pain on a scale of 0 to 10.
- The nurses may give you medications to help with pain, as needed. They will keep checking your pain levels to make sure you are as comfortable as possible.
- The skin around the surgery site may look like it has been dyed. This is normal. The dye is from a liquid that O.R. staff use to clean your skin before surgery.
- When you are more awake and comfortable, PACU staff will take you to the post-recovery area to get ready to go home.

Post-recovery area

- A nurse will talk to you about what to expect at home. Staff will go over instructions about your care at home and answer your questions.
- These instructions will include:
 - › What type of activities you will be able to do when you go home (like housework, lifting, driving)
 - › Appointments for follow-up visits
 - › Prescriptions for pain medication, if needed

- You may need to stop taking some of your medications before your surgery. Tell your surgeon if you are taking any of these medications or supplements:
 - › Blood thinners (like warfarin) or heart medications, like ARBs and ACE inhibitors
 - › Weight-loss medications, like Ozempic®
 - › Over-the-counter medications, like Aspirin® (ASA)
 - › Herbal products
- Follow the instructions you were given about your medications in the Perioperative Anesthesia Clinic or the Pre-admission Clinic.
- If you have allergies to any medications and you do not know their names, check with your pharmacy or primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner) before your surgery.

The night before surgery:

- Take a bath or a shower the evening before or the morning of your surgery. Wash all parts of your body, including your hair. **Do not use scented products.** Nova Scotia Health is scent-free.
- You will be given instructions about how to get your skin ready for surgery, if needed.

- **Do not smoke or vape after your evening meal the night before your surgery.**
- **Nova Scotia Health is smoke-free.** Ask a member of your health care team about the Smoking Cessation Program, if needed.

The night before surgery:

- **Do not** eat any food, including candy, after midnight the night before your surgery.
- You may drink **clear liquids up until 2 hours before your surgery**, unless told otherwise by your surgeon. Clear liquids include:
 - › Water
 - › Pulp-free juice, like apple or cranberry juice (**no orange juice**)
 - › Sports drinks (like Gatorade® or Powerade®)
 - › Tea or coffee **without milk or cream**
- You may take your medications as told by your surgeon with sips of water.
- You may brush your teeth.

If you do not follow these instructions, your surgery will be cancelled.

Updating your support persons about your progress

- Your support persons are an important part of your care.
- Every Nova Scotia Health hospital has a waiting area for support persons to wait in.
- During your surgery, your support persons will be updated about your progress as needed.
- When you are ready to go home, a staff member will call this person. **You will not be allowed to walk home, or take a taxi or a bus alone.**

After surgery

Recovery area

- You will wake up in the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). Most patients recover from their anesthetic in this area.
- The nurses in the PACU will closely check you:
 - › I.V.
 - › Pulse
 - › Dressings
 - › Breathing
 - › Drainage tubes
 - › Oxygen levels
 - › Blood pressure
- The nurses may give you oxygen through nasal prongs (tubes placed in your nostrils) or a face mask, if needed.

Surgery

The O.R.

- A nurse will talk with you before you go to the O.R. They will ask you questions from a surgical safety checklist.
- The air in the O.R. can feel cold. We will give you a warm blanket.
- Staff will help you move to a bed.
- You will have an intravenous (I.V.) tube placed in a vein in your arm or hand. Through the I.V., you will get medications that will help you relax and may make you go to sleep.
- Depending on what surgery you are having, a large pad may be placed on your leg, back, or shoulder. This is called a grounding pad. It is used for safety.
- Your surgeon and anesthesiologist (a doctor who puts you to sleep for your surgery) will talk with you before your surgery to answer any questions you may have.

Day of surgery

- Leave all valuables (like jewelry, money, credit cards, cheque books) at home. The hospital is not responsible for the loss of any item.
 - **Do not wear any jewelry, including toe rings.** Any item used to pierce **any** body part (like the nose, belly button, tongue, or ear) **must** be taken out at home.
- ### Items to bring to the hospital:
- Your provincial health card
 - All of your medications in their original containers (including puffers, patches, injections, creams, and over-the-counter or herbal products)
 - CPAP machine (if you use one)
 - Walking aids (crutches, cane), if needed
 - Braces or slings for after your surgery, if needed
 - Loose-fitting clothing to wear home (like a sweat suit and comfortable shoes)
 - › Anything tight may not be comfortable at the surgery site (area where you had surgery), or may be too tight to fit over a cast or dressing

- Wear your dentures
 - › Just before you go to the O.R., we will ask you to remove them and place them in a denture cup labelled with your name.
- A storage case for your hearing aid, if you have one
- A storage case for your glasses, if you are wearing them
 - › We will take your glasses just before you go to the O.R.
 - › They will be returned to you in the recovery area
- **Do not** wear contact lenses
 - › If this is not possible, bring your lens container and cleaning solutions
 - › Remember to tell your nurse that you are wearing contact lenses
 - › You must remove them before you go to the O.R.

Go to the Same Day Surgery Unit:

- Arrive 3 hours before your scheduled surgery time, or as directed.
 - › **Exception:** If your surgery is scheduled for 7:30 a.m., arrive by: _____

Same Day Surgery Unit

Pre-operative (Pre-op)

- This is where you will get ready for the O.R.
- **Food or drinks are not allowed in the pre-op room.**
- Staff will give you a hospital gown, a housecoat, and slippers to change into.
- Your health care team will bring your clothes and personal belongings with you.
- You may bring someone to wait with you in the pre-op area until it is time for you to go to the O.R. Ask a member of your health care team if you are able to have someone stay with you.
- The pre-op nurse will talk with you as part of your pre-op assessment. They may ask you questions that you have already answered. They need to ask these questions to meet Nova Scotia Health's patient safety standards.