

# Before and After a Day Surgery Procedure

**Your surgery will be at:**

- Halifax Infirmary
- Victoria General Hospital
- Dartmouth General Hospital

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

# Before and After a Day Surgery Procedure

## Welcome!

This guide will help you learn how to care for yourself safely before and after day surgery.

As a **Day Surgery** patient you will:

- Come to the hospital on the day of your surgery.
- Have your surgery done in the Operating Room (OR).
- Return home after your surgery with a responsible adult who will take you home and help you as needed.

Your surgeon's office will contact you with a surgery date and time. If you do not hear from them, please contact your surgeon's office directly.

**Your surgery may be cancelled if you are late.**

**If you are not able to keep your appointment, contact your surgeon's office to let them know. There is space near the end of this guide to write down questions to ask your health care team.**

**What are your questions?  
Please ask. We are here to help you.**

## Please come to the Same Day Surgery Unit:

- Halifax Infirmary, 5th floor
  - **Arrive 3 hours before your scheduled surgery time** or as directed by your surgeon's office.
    - › If your surgery is scheduled for 7:30 a.m., please make sure you arrive by 5:30 a.m.
  - Enter at the Robie Street entrance, and look for the elevator to the left of the kiosks. Take the elevator to the 5th floor and register at the desk.
  
- Victoria General, Victoria building, 10th floor
  - **Arrive 3 hours before your scheduled surgery time** or as directed by your surgeon's office.
    - › If your surgery is scheduled for 7:30 a.m., please make sure you arrive by 6 a.m.
  - Take the Victoria building elevator to the 10th floor, and follow signs to registration.
  
- Dartmouth General, main level
  - **Arrive 2 hours before your scheduled surgery time** or as directed by your surgeon's office.
    - › If your surgery is scheduled for 7:30 a.m., please make sure you arrive by 6:30 a.m.
  - Register at the registration desk at the main entrance.

Delays in the OR 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 arrange a new date.

You may need tests before your surgery. This will depend on your general health and the type of surgery you are having. Staff will contact you to arrange your testing before surgery, if needed.

## **Getting ready for surgery**

**Please bring with you on the day of surgery:**

- Provincial health card
- All of your medications in their original containers (including puffers, patches, injections, creams, and over-the-counter or herbal preparations)
- CPAP machine (if you use one)
- Walking aids (crutches, canes)
- Braces or slings for after your surgery, if needed
- Loose-fitting clothing to wear home, such as a sweat suit and comfortable shoes – anything tight may be uncomfortable at the surgery site, or be too tight to fit over casts or dressings

## **Anesthetic**

With a general anesthetic, you will be given medication to put you to sleep for your surgery. A regional anesthetic means an area of your body is frozen. Sedation (medication to help you relax) is usually given along with regional anesthesia.

### **If you are having a general or regional anesthetic:**

- Do not eat any food, including candy, after midnight the night before surgery.
- You may drink clear liquids up until 3 hours before your surgery, unless otherwise directed. Clear liquids include: water, pulp-free juice such as apple or cranberry juice (NOT ORANGE JUICE), sports drinks, black tea, or coffee (WITHOUT MILK OR CREAM).
- You may take your medications as told by your doctor with sips of water.
- You may brush your teeth.

**After a general anesthetic, regional anesthetic, or intravenous (IV) sedation:**

- You must have a responsible adult drive you home.
- You must have a responsible adult who can look after you and stay with you for the first 24 hours after surgery.
- If you have questions or concerns specifically about your anesthesia care, for the:
  - › Halifax Infirmary or Victoria General Hospital, please call 902-473-4326. If it is after business hours, leave a confidential voicemail and your call will be returned.
  - › Dartmouth General Hospital, please call your surgeon's office.

## For the first 24 hours after your surgery:

- Do not drive a car or operate heavy machinery.
- **Do not drink alcohol.**
- Do not sign any legal documents or important papers.
- Do not act as the primary caregiver to dependants.

**Do not drink alcohol while taking pain medication.**



## General health and hygiene

- Call your surgeon before coming to the hospital if you have a fever or cold, or flu-like symptoms.
- Take a complete bath or shower and shampoo your hair the evening before or the morning of your surgery.
- NSHA is scent-free. **Do not use** scented products.
- Try to get a good night's rest the night before surgery.

## **Medications**

- On the day of surgery, please bring ALL of your medications with you in their original containers.
- Tell your surgeon at least one week before your surgery if you are taking any of these medications or supplements:
  - › Blood thinners (e.g., warfarin)
  - › Over-the-counter medications (e.g., Aspirin® (ASA)) or
  - › Herbal preparations
- These medications may need to be stopped before your surgery.
- If you have any allergies to medications and you do not know their name(s), check with your pharmacy or doctor.

## **Smoking**

Smoking slows down your body's ability to heal. It is best if you can stop smoking for 2 weeks leading up to your surgery date. If you are not able to do this, please do not smoke after your evening meal, the night before surgery. Smoking can cause more secretions in your lungs, and you could have problems with your breathing after your anesthetic.

**Nova Scotia Health Authority is smoke-free and vape-free.**



## **Dentures**

You may wear your dentures to the hospital. Just before you go to the Operating Room (OR), you will be asked to remove your dentures and place them in a denture cup labelled with your name.

## **Glasses or contact lenses**

Bring a case to store your glasses when they are not being used. Your glasses will be taken from you just before you go to the OR. They will be returned to you in the recovery area. Do not wear contact lenses. If this is not possible, please bring your lens container and cleaning solutions. Remember to tell your nurse that you are wearing contact lenses. They must be removed before you go to the OR.

## **Hearing aids**

If you wear a hearing aid, bring it and a storage container with you.

## **Valuables**

Leave all valuables (jewelry, money, credit cards, cheque books) at home. The hospital is not responsible for the loss of any item.

**All jewelry including toe rings must be taken out at home. Any item used to pierce ANY body part, such as the nose, belly button, tongue, or ear, must be removed.**

## Same Day Surgery Unit

### Pre-operative (Pre-op) preparation

- **No food or drinks are allowed in the pre-op room.**
- You will get ready for the OR in the pre-op room. We will ask you to change into hospital clothing: a johnny shirt, dressing gown, and slippers.
- Your clothes and other belongings will be placed in a locker.
- Your family member or friend can wait with you in the pre-op area until it is time for you to go to surgery.

The pre-op nurse will talk with to you to complete your admission paperwork. To meet NSHA's patient safety standards, the nurse will ask you several questions that you may have already answered.

# **Surgery**

## **The Operating Room (OR)**

- An OR nurse will talk with you and ask you several questions based on a surgical safety checklist.
- The OR is usually cool. You will be given a warm blanket.
- The staff will help you move to an OR bed.
- Before you go to sleep, you will have an intravenous (IV) started.
- Your surgeon and anesthesiologist will talk with you just before you are given anesthesia.

## **Updating your family and friends**

All sites have a waiting area for family and friends.

At the Halifax Infirmary and Victoria General sites, a liaison nurse visits the waiting area several times during the day. This nurse will keep your family and friends up to date about your condition and progress. The liaison nurse works Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

At the Dartmouth General Hospital, Same Day Surgery staff will update your family and friends.

# 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 nurse caring for you in the PACU will frequently check your:

- › blood pressure and pulse
- › breathing and possible need for oxygen
- › IV
- › dressings and drainage tubes (if you have them)

Your nurse will also check your level of discomfort/pain and give you medications as needed.

The skin around where you had your surgery may be pink. This is normal. It is a cleansing solution used in the OR to make sure your skin is clean before surgery.

When you are more awake and comfortable, you will be taken to the post-recovery area to get ready to go home.

## **Post-recovery area**

Staff will go over instructions about your care at home and answer your questions. Your nurse will talk with you about what to expect at home after your surgery.

Some of these instructions will include what type of activities you will be able to do when you go home (housework, lifting, driving), appointments for followup visits, and prescriptions, if needed.

After instructions have been given to you, a nurse will help you get dressed in your loose-fitting clothing to go home.

## **Going home**

A responsible adult must drive you home from the hospital. When you are ready for discharge, a staff member will call this person. You will not be allowed to walk home or take public transit.

You must also have someone stay with you overnight at home, to provide care to you as needed. If you have small children, arrange for someone to help you for a few days if needed.

Please write down any questions you would like to ask staff on the next page.



### **Looking for more health information?**

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

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*Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!*

[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.