



Patient & Family Guide
2019

Orthopedic Waitlist Surgery



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Orthopedic Waitlist Surgery

- You are on a waitlist for orthopedic surgery. Your surgery will be done as soon as possible. How long you have to wait depends on how many people are already on the list and how serious each person's injury is.
- You may need to be admitted to hospital to wait for your surgery or you may be able to go home and we will call you to come in for surgery.
- If you are waiting at home, the hospital will need a phone number to reach you at. Someone from the hospital will call you to tell you when to come to the hospital. They will also tell you where to register for your surgery. It is important that we can reach you at the phone number you give us.
- **Do not eat or drink anything after midnight** to get ready for your surgery.
- **You must have someone available to drive you to the hospital at any time.**

Your surgery may be cancelled if you are late arriving to the hospital.

- If your surgery is not done on the first day, we will call you at the number you gave us by 3 p.m. and you will be placed on the waitlist for the next day. **You will not be able to eat or drink anything after midnight.** Please be patient, as there may be many people waiting for surgery.

When you are called to come in for surgery:

- **Weekdays, 7 a.m.–5 p.m. go to:**
 - › Same Day Surgery Unit – Level 5, Halifax Infirmary (Robie Street entrance)
- **Weekends, holidays go to:**
 - › Emergency Department

Please bring your provincial health card with you. If you have any questions or if your condition changes, call 902-473-2222 and ask that the on-call resident for orthopedics be paged.

Getting ready for surgery

Health and hygiene

- Please tell your surgeon before coming to the hospital if you have a fever, cold, or flu-like symptoms.
- Take a complete bath or shower and shampoo your hair the evening before or the morning of surgery.
- Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA) is scent-free. Please do not use any scented products.

Medications

- Ask your surgeon what medications you can take on the day of your surgery. The medications you are allowed to take should be taken with a sip of water only.

Smoking/vaping

- Please do not smoke or vape after your evening meal on the night before surgery. Smoking can cause more secretions (mucus) in your lungs and you may have problems with your breathing during and after surgery.
- Please remember that NSHA is smoke and vape-free.

Food and drink

- Continue to eat healthy foods every day.
- **Do not eat or drink any solid foods or liquids after midnight** on the night before your surgery (this includes gum and mints).
- If your surgery is cancelled, eat well for the rest of the day and stop eating and drinking again at midnight.
- **Do not drink alcohol from now until you have recovered** from your surgery. Alcohol slows down healing.

Dentures

- You may wear your dentures to the hospital. Just before you go to the Operating Room (OR), they will be removed and placed in a denture cup until after surgery.

Glasses/contact lenses

- Bring a case to store your glasses in 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. Be sure to tell your nurse you are wearing contact lenses. They must be taken out before you go to the OR.

Hearing aids

- If you wear a hearing aid, bring it and a storage case with you. Depending on how much hearing loss you have, you may be allowed to wear your hearing aid to the OR. If you have to remove your hearing aid, it will be returned to you in the recovery area after surgery.

CPAP/Bi-PAP™

- If you have diagnosed sleep apnea and have your own CPAP/Bi-PAP™ machine, it is very important that you bring it with you to the hospital. You will be put on your CPAP/Bi-PAP™ right after surgery.

Valuables

- Leave all valuables (e.g., 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 removed at home. Any item used to pierce a body part (such as the nose, belly button, tongue, or ear) must be removed.**

Please bring the following to the hospital:

- A copy of your Personal Directive (if you have one).
- Your provincial health card (MSI card).
- All medications that you are taking, in their original containers.
- Any walking aids (e.g., crutches, canes, braces) that you have been told you will need.
- Loose-fitting clothing to wear home, such as a sweatsuit and comfortable shoes. Anything that fits tightly may be uncomfortable and may be too tight to fit over casts or dressings.

**You will be asked to come to the hospital
3 hours before your surgery time.**

Day of surgery

- A nurse will ask you questions and give you information about your surgery.
- You will be asked to put on a johnny shirt, dressing gown, and slippers.
- Your clothes and other belongings will be put in a locker.
- You will have a wait before going to the OR. Just before leaving for the OR, you will be asked to remove your dentures and glasses.

Surgery

- **You will need an anesthetic (medication to put you to sleep) for your surgery. Your surgeon and anesthesiologist will talk about this with you.**
- You will have an intravenous (IV) started before your surgery.
- Your surgeon and anesthesiologist will talk with you just before you are given the anesthetic.

The Operating Room (OR)

- An OR staff member will take you to the OR.
- You will be greeted by a nurse who will ask you several questions. This is done to meet the standards of patient safety.
- The staff will be wearing masks, caps, and special blue clothing to make sure that the OR stays clean.
- The OR is usually cool. You will be given a warm blanket.
- The staff will help you move to an OR bed. A belt similar to a car seatbelt will be placed around you for safety.

Waiting room

- There is a waiting area for family and friends while you are in surgery/recovery.

Surgical liaison nurse

- The surgical liaison nurse visits the waiting area several times during the day. Family and friends will be kept up-to-date about your condition. This nurse is not available on weekends or holidays.

After surgery

- You will be taken to a special recovery area called the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU).
- The nurses will frequently check your:
 - › blood pressure and pulse
 - › oxygen levels (using a clothespin-like device)
 - › breathing
 - › IV
 - › dressings
- A nurse will check your level of discomfort/pain and give you medications as needed.
- You may be sleepy, your mouth may be dry, and you may have a small plastic tube in place to help your breathing.

- You may be given oxygen for a short time **through a face mask or nasal prongs.**
- A clothespin-like device attached to your finger may still be in place to measure your oxygen levels.
- There may be a small amount of drainage on your dressings. This is normal. Your nurse will watch your dressings and call the surgeon, if needed.
- When you are more awake and comfortable, you will be taken to the post-recovery area and get ready to go home.
- If you need to stay in the hospital for observation, you will be taken to the nursing unit and given instructions about your care and followup.

Discharge information

- The nurse will review instructions for your care at home with you and answer any questions you may have. They will also explain your surgeon's instructions. These will include what type of activities you will be able to do when you get home (e.g., housework, lifting, driving), appointments for followup visits, and prescriptions (if needed).

- You will change into your own clothing.
- After 7 p.m. on weekdays and on weekends or holidays, you will be discharged from the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). Instructions will be given to you in this area.

Going home

- When you are ready for discharge, staff will call the person who will be taking you home.
- You will not be allowed to walk home or ride the bus. You will only be allowed to take a taxi if someone is with you.
- After surgery, you will need a responsible adult to take you home and stay with you for 24 hours to provide care, as needed.
- **For 24 hours after surgery, do not:**
 - › operate heavy machinery
 - › sign any legal documents or important papers, or make any important decisions
 - › drive a car
 - › drink alcohol
- **Do not drink alcohol while you are taking prescription pain medication.**
- If you have small children, plan for someone to help you for a few days, if needed.

We trust that this pamphlet has helped you. We would like to hear your comments and/or suggestions about this pamphlet and your hospital stay. Comment boxes are available on the inpatient nursing units and in the followup Orthopedic Clinic.

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments about the care you have received, you can also contact the Patient Representative at:

- Toll-free: 1-844-884-4177
- Email: healthcareexperience@nshealth.ca

Please use the space below to write down any questions for your health care team.

Looking for more health information?

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

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>

Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.

Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!

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The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

WE85-1406 © May 2019 Nova Scotia Health Authority

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