

What to Expect

The Day Before Surgery

Most often you can eat your usual diet at supper time, and may eat and drink until midnight. You are not to eat or drink anything after midnight. This is called NPO (nothing by mouth). This includes chewing gum and hard candy because they cause an increase in production of stomach juices. You may brush your teeth, but do not swallow any water.

You will be told when to report to University Hospital.

The Day of Surgery

Medications that you routinely take should be taken with your doctor's instructions at their prescribed time with only a small sip of water.

On the morning of surgery, you may take a shower, brush your teeth, and gargle. Do not drink any water, because you are still NPO (nothing by mouth).

All jewelry, hairpieces, hair clips, barrettes, dentures and plates, contact lenses, glass eyes and artificial limbs must be removed.

Makeup and nail polish must also be removed (acrylic nails are acceptable if polish is removed).

Please leave all valuables at home or with a family member. We advise that this is to include your wedding rings and band.

Pre-Surgical Care Area

Please let us know if you have new concerns or there has been a change in your health status since your pre-op visit. The pre-surgical area is where we begin to prepare you for surgery. Here you will be asked to wear only a hospital gown into the operating room. Your clothing and other personal belongings can be given to your family or significant other to bring to your hospital room after your surgery is done. Only 2 visitors are permitted in this area.

Here you will meet the anesthesiologists who will care for you. Any questions concerning your anesthesia, including what type of anesthesia you will have, what medications you will receive, and how your pain will be treated after surgery should be discussed then.

Your Operating Room Nurse will also meet with you before your surgery. At this time the nurse will check your identity by looking at your name bracelet. He/she will ask your name, what kind of surgery you are having, and what allergies you may have.

An intravenous line (I.V.) will be started before going to the operating room. It is important that you empty your bladder before you receive medication, and before you receive your I.V. The I.V. is often placed in a vein in the hand or lower arm. IV's are usually used for fluids, medications (E.G., anesthesia, antibiotics, pain medications) and in some cases, blood administration. The I.V. is securely taped, and should not cause any discomfort. If it does, tell the nurse.

An elastic stocking will be placed on the leg opposite the side you are having your surgery on. This will help the blood flow in your leg while you are asleep.

Surgery Waiting Room

While you are in surgery and the recovery room, your visitors may wait in the surgery waiting room on the 5th floor. This area is staffed by volunteers. If your visitors leave this area, they should tell the volunteer where they are going so they can be located if the surgeon needs to speak with them. The cafeteria is on the 2nd floor, should your visitors want food or beverages. Rest rooms are located next to the surgery waiting room on the 5th floor.

Operating Room

You will be taken to the operating room (O.R.) on a stretcher by the O.R. Staff. The O. R. staff wear face masks, head coverings and special clothes. It is also necessary to keep the rooms in the O.R. cool. If it is too cool, you will be able to have a "warm" blanket. Do not hesitate to ask for a blanket if you are cold.

When the time comes, your O.R. nurse will check your identity by looking at your name bracelet. The nurse will ask your name and what kind of surgery you are having. The nurse will then help you onto the operating room table. This is a narrow bed, so a safety belt will be used to secure you. Even though everyone may look very busy, ask any questions that you may have. There is a nurse and doctor with you at all times.