

Preparing for Your Surgery:

Illness, injury, or surgery can cause changes in your life. Even if your hospital stay is short, things that can be affected during your recovery can include your ability to:

- Bathe or dress
- Grocery shop/do errands
- Cook
- Clean
- Wash clothes
- Climb up and down stairs
- Stand or bend
- Drive your car
- Do hobbies
- Play sports
- Care for your children and/or an older parent or spouse
- Care for pets

Careful planning will help you prepare for these changes and will help make your recovery smoother. The more you prepare before you enter the hospital, the easier it will be after your surgery. We depend on what you tell us about your health, home and interests to help you and your family plan for your discharge. Consider these questions:

1. Can you care for yourself at home?
2. Will you need help with any of the following?

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bathing/dressing | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional support | <input type="checkbox"/> Getting around your home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finances | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Washing clothes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preparing meals | <input type="checkbox"/> Medications | |

Preparing for Your Surgery:

Get Your Home Ready!

One of our goals is to lower the chances of accidents in your home. Here are some simple changes you can make to prevent falls or injuries. Making these changes before your surgery will help make your recovery smoother.

Keep your walkway paths clear:

- Arrange furniture so you can walk around easily.
- Watch for small pets and objects on the floor.
- Wrap up/tape down long electric and telephone cords.
- Remove throw rugs.
- Check areas of your home for uneven or loose flooring.
- Arrange to have outside paths and walkways cleared of snow and ice.

Place items that you use often within easy reach

- A cordless or portable phone.
- Store food and supplies that you use often in cupboards or on counters that are at waist to shoulder level.
- Place clothing that you use often in drawers and closets at waist to shoulder level.

Preparing for Your Surgery:

Get Your Home Ready (cont.)!

- Keep your floor and counter surfaces dry, especially after bathing.
- Make sure spills get cleaned up quickly.
- Get a non-slip mat for the bottom of your bathtub to prevent slipping.
- Limit climbing stairs to 1-2 times each day if possible.
- To conserve your strength, place a chair in your kitchen, bedroom, bathroom and on stair landing to complete tasks while sitting.
- Add firm pillows or cushions to low chairs.
- If you have a waterbed, please let us know, as you cannot use a waterbed after surgery.

Preparing for Your Surgery:

Planning Ahead for Your Discharge

Practice what we taught you during your pre-operative visit

- If you were instructed by physical therapy and/or occupational therapy, please practice what the therapist taught you.

Prevent Constipation

- Bowel movements are important, and having one before you enter the hospital will benefit you. Three days before your scheduled admission date, if you find you cannot go on your own, a mild laxative can be taken such as milk of magnesia or Senokot. Call your doctor if these methods do not work.

Bring the following to the hospital with you

- Review this book and bring it with you!!!
- A pair of non-skid flat shoes, such as oxford or athletic shoes, to use in physical therapy and for walking.
- Loose comfortable clothing so that you can practice dressing skills before you are discharged.

Prepare before you are admitted to the hospital

- You will need a thermometer to take your temperature twice daily after you go home
- If you have any medical equipment at home, such as a walker, crutches, shower bench, please let us know.

Preparing for Your Surgery:

Planning Ahead for Your Discharge :

Arrange to have someone:

- take you home from the hospital.
- stay with you for at least a week after you are discharged from the hospital.
- help with errands and groceries.
- take you to your doctor's office.
- care for a child, spouse or parent while you are in the hospital and once you are discharged from the hospital.

Plan for meals and groceries after your hospital discharge.

- Many patients find preparing and freezing meals ahead of time is helpful.
- Stock up on frozen foods, canned goods, paper products, and personal hygiene products to decrease the need for errands during your recovery period.

Preparing for Your Surgery:

Preparing for your discharge from University Hospital

The health care team will arrange for any services or care you may need once you leave the hospital. If necessary, your doctor may order continued care in your home or a stay in a short term rehabilitation facility.

If you already receive home care services, such as a nurse, aide or therapist, it is important for us to know what company or agency they work for.

If you would like to speak with someone about your discharge plan before you come into the hospital, please call our Continuum of Care Department (464-6161).

Please remember that our relationship with you does not end when you leave the hospital. If any problems occur with any special service we arrange for you, please call the case manager or social worker who arranged the service for you.

- Social Work Department: (315) 464-5175.
- Case Management/Continuum of Care Department: (315) 464-6161.

Other Resources:

Health Connections: (315) 464-8668

Hours of Operation: 24 hours/day

Services: University Hospital's free and confidential health information, advice and referral service

Web site: www.universityhospital.org

Health Information Center: (315) 464-4410 • (315) 464-7208 TTY

Health Sciences Library, 750 East Adams St
Syracuse, New York 13210

Services: Free and confidential medical information services. Lending collection of health materials including books, videos, multimedia CD ROMS, etc. Provides copies of journal articles, pamphlets and newsletters.

e-mail: HIC@upstate.edu

Web site: www.upstate.edu/library/hic/