



## Preparing for Your Surgery

**Welcome to Southern New Hampshire Medical Center! We are pleased that you have chosen us for your care. Below is important information to help you and your family prepare for surgery.**

**Date of surgery:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of pre-surgical interview:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Important information:**

- If your surgery is scheduled for 8:00 in the morning, or earlier, have nothing to eat or drink *after midnight*.
- If your surgery is scheduled for later than 8:00 in the morning, have nothing to eat *after midnight* or for **at least 8 hours before your surgery**. You may drink clear liquids up to 3 hours before your surgery. A clear liquid is any liquid that you could read a newspaper through. (Clear liquids include water, apple juice, cranberry juice, clear sodas, Gatorade, Jell-O, and clear broth. **No** milk or milk products, orange juice or juices with pulp.)
- Do not use chewing tobacco, gum, breath mints, or breath strips, etc.
- If you do not follow these instructions, your surgery could be delayed or cancelled.
- You will receive a call the day before your surgery to verify the time of your surgery.
- On the day of surgery, if you get sick or if you will not get to the hospital on time, **please call 577-2450 and leave a message.**

## **Several days before your surgery:**

Making plans ahead of time can make your day of surgery easier.

- Tell your doctor all the medicines you take every day, including prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines, herbal medicines and supplements, and vitamins.
- Ask your doctor if you should take any medicines on the morning of your surgery.
- You may be scheduled for some tests like a blood test, an EKG (electrocardiogram) or x-rays before your surgery.
- Arrange for a responsible adult to take you to the hospital and drive you home on the day of your surgery. For your safety, you are not allowed to drive or take a taxi or bus by yourself. Please arrange for a responsible adult to stay with you for the first 24 hours after your surgery.
- You can expect a phone call from a nurse in the Pre-Admissions Department. During the call, the nurse will review your health and medication history. For your safety, tell the nurse about any allergies you have to food, medicine, latex, or anything else. Ask the nurse any questions you may have. During the interview you will get more information about preparing for your surgery.
- Please tell the Pre-Admission nurse your home phone number, cell phone number, and work number so we can reach you if your surgery time needs to be changed.
- If you are staying overnight, please bring one small overnight bag with you.
- If you are a smoker, be prepared **not** to smoke the day of your surgery.

## **The day before your surgery:**

For your comfort and safety, please follow the preparations below.

- You will receive a phone call from Surgical Services confirming the time of your surgery and when you should arrive at the hospital.
- Bathe or shower and shampoo the night before or the morning of surgery. This can help you feel better while you are recovering. Remove all nail polish, acrylic fingernails, and make-up. Do not use powders, deodorants, or perfumes.
- Please do not shave the area where you are having surgery. For men, if you are having surgery on your head, neck or face, do not shave.
- For women, do not shave your underarms, legs, or anywhere else before your surgery.

## **The day of surgery:**

We want your day of surgery to go smoothly. Please arrive at the hospital at the time confirmed by Surgical Services. This time is usually 90 minutes before your scheduled procedure.

- Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothes that are easy to remove.
- Remove and leave all jewelry including body piercings, money and valuables at home.
- If your surgeon instructs you to take some of your medicines the morning of your surgery, take them with a small sip of water **only**.

## **What to bring to the hospital:**

To make your experience more comfortable and efficient, we suggest that you bring the following:

- A current list of all the medicines you take every day, including prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbal medicines, and supplements. List the amount of the medicine you take, how often you take it, and the last time you took your medicine.
- A list of any allergies you may have to medicine, food, latex, or anything else.
- Eyeglasses, contact lenses, dentures, hearing aids, or prosthesis, if you use them.
- Health insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, or prescription cards.

## **What to do when you arrive:**

- Check in at the Surgical Services Registration and Waiting Area on the second floor of The Medical Center. To get to the Waiting Area, take the Emergency Entrance elevators to the second floor. Our Surgical Services Waiting Room receptionist will greet you and review your information.
- A member of the Surgical Services team will escort you to the Pre-operative area where you will be prepared for surgery. The preparation includes reviewing consents, putting on an identification bracelet, and taking your vital signs. We may ask you for more information. Many of the questions you were asked earlier will be asked again. This is a safety measure to make sure that all of the information in your record is correct. We encourage you to ask questions at any

time during your hospital stay.

- You will meet with a member of the anesthesia team, a surgical nurse, and your surgeon before your surgery. For your safety, your surgeon and surgical nurse will confirm the surgical procedure with you and verify the location of your operation. Your surgeon will write the word “yes” on the correct side of your body and the location of surgery when appropriate.
- Speak up if you are breastfeeding. The anesthesia team will choose the best anesthesia medicine for you that will not interrupt breastfeeding. The Lactation Center at the Birthplace can help you find information on medicine and breastfeeding. You can bring your own breast pump from home or one can be provided to you by the Lactation Center. Call them at 603-577-2662.
- We do everything possible to see that your surgery starts at the time you were given. Unfortunately, sometimes there are delays we cannot control.
- Your family or friends can follow your progress through surgery by checking a special TV screen in the Surgical Services Registration and Waiting Area.

#### After surgery:

- You will be taken to the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU).
- Our goal is to make you as comfortable as possible. Our staff wants to know about your questions, concerns, discomfort or pain. Let your nurse know if you are uncomfortable or feel sick to your stomach. There are medicines to help relieve the nausea, discomfort, or pain.
- Your nurse will check your surgical site and your vital signs frequently throughout your stay in the PACU.
- If you are going home on the same day, when you are comfortable and are able to sit in a recliner, you may have an adult stay with you in the PACU.
- When you are alert, comfortable, and can drink fluids, you are ready to go home.
- If you are staying overnight, an adult may visit you in PACU for a short time when you are comfortable. You will be transferred to your room soon after.

#### Going home:

- Your nurse will give you written instructions to follow at home. It is helpful to have a responsible adult listen as the nurse reviews your instructions. Make sure

you understand all of the instructions. Speak up if you have any questions, concerns or do not understand something.

- For your safety, a transporter will take you to the lobby in a wheelchair where you will meet your responsible adult who will drive you home.
- You may choose to fill your prescription(s) at our pharmacy, located on the first floor near the lobby. They can be picked up prior to discharge.

*We are pleased that you have chosen Southern New Hampshire Medical Center for your surgery. If you have questions about your care when you get home, call us in the PACU at 577-2460.*

Please use the space below to write any questions or concerns you have about your surgery.



*A higher level of care is more than words. Our people make it happen every day.*