

Your guide to surgery

Preparation

Before surgery you'll meet with your doctor, discuss risks and benefits, pre-register and complete necessary tests and procedures. It is important that you get answers to all of your questions. You should never hesitate to ask your physician or the Trinity staff any question you may have.

To prepare you for surgery, a surgical teaching nurse may meet with you or contact you by phone. This nurse gathers information regarding your general health. At this time, you may also be scheduled to meet with other health care professionals.

Routine tests and procedures may be required to determine your state of health. If you have had recent tests, please tell the pre-surgical nurse. Tests will vary, but may include blood and urine tests, an EKG for heart analysis, and a chest X-ray to determine if your lungs are safe for surgery and anesthesia.

Pre-surgery steps:

- Quit smoking or at least cut down before surgery.
- Stop drinking alcohol at least 24 hours before surgery.
- Advise the pre-surgical nurse of any illegal drug use.
- Ask your doctor about taking any medications (including herbal supplements) before surgery.
- Arrange for rides to and from the medical campus.
- Do not eat anything after midnight the night before surgery. You may drink clear fluids (apple juice, water, tea and coffee without milk, creamer or sugar) as directed by the pre-surgical nurse or your doctor.
- If you get a fever, cold or rash, call your doctor. Surgery may need to be postponed.
- Plan for post-surgery needs such as transportation, home care or skilled care.
- Make changes in your home. For example, if you're told not to climb stairs, you may want to prepare a bed on the first floor.
- Prepare food ahead or buy pre-made meals to reduce the amount of work you have after surgery.
- Arrange for friends or relatives to check in on you after surgery.
- Visit the Community Health Resource Center at Trinity Rock Island to learn more about your condition and your procedure.
- Provide the hospital with a copy of your advance medical directive, if you have one. This statement describes the medical treatment you'd want or names the person you'd wish to make health-care decisions for you if you could no longer speak for yourself.
- Remove all jewelry and piercings (including wedding rings).

On the day of surgery, please remember to:

- Shower or bathe.
- Do not apply any lotions, powders, or cologne to the body.
- Do not use any hair products.
- Wear comfortable, loose clothing.
- Leave valuables, such as jewelry, cash and credit cards at home.
- Remove makeup, lipstick and fingernail polish.

Be sure to bring:

- Insurance cards or forms along with a photo ID.

- A parent or legal guardian if patient is younger than age 18.
- A list of your regular medicines with dosages and late time taken.
- Overnight clothes (if necessary), such as a robe and slippers.
- A case with your name on it, for personal items that you may need to remove, such as dentures, glasses or contact lenses.

When you arrive, you'll sign insurance release forms and a surgery consent form if you haven't done so already. If you are a minor, your parent or guardian will fill these out. To protect your confidentiality and privacy, your friends and family will be asked to wait in the waiting room briefly.

You'll be guided to a surgery preparation area. You'll change into a hospital gown and get an identification bracelet. You should remove your glasses or contact lenses. If you have a hearing aid or dentures, ask whether you should remove them for surgery. A nurse will go over your health history with you and have you sign your surgical consent. An intravenous line will be started in an arm or hand vein to provide medication and fluids during surgery, except in local procedures. Once you are settled into your admitting room, your friends or family will be able to visit with you.

For more information contact the pre-surgical teaching department at (309) 779-5960.

Your health care team

A team of trained professionals staffs the surgical suite or operating room (OR). Your surgeon heads the team, often assisted by a surgical assistant. A surgical technician sets up the instruments needed for surgery and assists in surgery. A circulating nurse is charged with your care and ensures sterile procedures are used.

A member of the health care team will take you to the surgical suite. Your blood pressure, heart function, and oxygen level in your blood will be monitored.

You may also be attended by an anesthesiologist who administers anesthesia during the operation.