

Your doctor has scheduled you for surgery at the Huntsman Cancer Institute (HCI) Hospital. This factsheet will help you prepare for your surgery.

Before Your Surgery

A few days before your surgery, you may have an appointment with a doctor or nurse from HCI's surgery unit. If you do not have an appointment, a nurse will call you before your surgery.

The appointment will help you know what to expect on the day of your surgery. It also gives your care team information they need to help keep you safe during and after your surgery.

Here are some things that will happen during the appointment:

- We will ask about your health history and the medicines you take.
- We will give you information to help you prepare for surgery.
- We will draw your blood for lab tests.
- We may take X-rays.
- We may test your breathing and heart.
- We will tell you in writing which medicines you can take on the day of your surgery.
- If you have diabetes, we will give you special instructions for your insulin or oral medicines.

What Should I Bring to the Appointment?

- All the medicines you take, in their containers. Include all the pain medicines, vitamins, or herbal supplements you take.
- Results from lab tests or imaging done at another facility within 30 days of your surgery date.
- Contact information for other facilities that have your previous medical records.

Questions Before Your Surgery?

If you have questions about your surgery, please call 801-587-4380.

The Day of Your Surgery

Be sure to follow the instructions you received about taking your regular medicines.

Check in at the Surgery/Endoscopy desk on the third floor of HCI's Cancer Hospital. We will take you to a room to get ready for your surgery.

We will take your temperature, pulse, and blood pressure. These vital signs give your team important information about your physical condition.

We will weigh you. We use your weight to decide the right amounts of medicine to give you.

We will ask you for your name and date of birth several times. This is one way your surgical team makes sure each patient gets the correct surgery.

A nurse will confirm your surgery time and the procedure you will have. The nurse will also let you know of any delays.

A nurse will make sure all the tests needed for your surgery are done.

We will put an intravenous (IV) line in your arm. Please let the nurse know if you have any nausea or pain.

You may feel anxious. This is normal. Your care team may give you medicine through your IV line to help you relax before the surgery.

The anesthesia doctor will talk with you about the type of medicine you will get to keep you from feeling pain during the surgery.

Another nurse who will be with you during your surgery will talk with you. That nurse will also get the phone number of a family member we can call to give updates on your progress during surgery.

Your scheduled surgery time is an estimate. Sometimes delays happen.

When your surgery team is ready, they will take you to the operating room (OR).

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In the Operating Room (OR)

In the OR, you will see a lot of activity and people wearing surgical gowns and masks. There will be bright lights, strange equipment, and sterile instruments.

Do your best to stay calm and relaxed. If you had medicine to help you relax before surgery, you may not remember the OR at all.

The OR team will help you move to the operating table.

The anesthesia doctor will be near your head. The team will put devices that measure your blood pressure and heartbeat on you. They will put a clip on your finger that measures the oxygen in your blood. The surgical team watches these vital signs constantly during your surgery to make sure you are safe.

During the surgery, the anesthesia doctor will give you medicine through your IV so you will be relaxed and pain-free.

The surgeon and team will do the surgery. The nurse will call your family member with updates during the surgery.

In the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)

After your surgery is finished, we will take you to a recovery room called the PACU.

You will still be attached to heart, blood pressure, and oxygen monitors. We will check them often to make sure you are OK.

At first you will wear an oxygen mask. When your breathing rate and blood oxygen levels allow, we will replace the mask with an oxygen tube that rests just inside your nose.

The PACU nurses will ask you to breathe deeply and cough. They will ask often if you are feeling pain and will give you pain medicine when you need it. Be as accurate as you can about your level of pain so the nurse can help you.

The anesthesia can raise your risk of choking. The nurse will make sure you can swallow safely before giving you ice chips or water.

Your surgeon may give directions that you have no liquids at all for a certain time. If your mouth is dry, the nurse can moisten it with a wet swab.

The length of your stay in the PACU depends on the type of surgery and anesthesia you get. Most patients stay in the PACU for about 1 hour.

Usually, family members may not stay with patients in the PACU. If there is a long wait, we will move you to a PACU area where one family member may stay. If you or another patient in the area has a medical problem, your family member will have to leave.

When your pain and nausea are under control and your vital signs are stable, we will move you to a hospital room. If you are going home the day of your surgery, we will move you to the Short Stay Unit.

Managing Pain after Your Surgery

You will probably have some pain after your surgery. We will give you pain medicines and other therapies such as ice packs to lower your pain as much as we can.

Your nurses will ask you often about your level of pain. They will listen to you, acknowledge your pain, and give you pain medicines safely.

If You Stay in the Hospital

After the hospital staff settles you into your room, your family can join you. The staff will teach you how to call the nurses and use the bed controls and television.

The nurse will talk with you about the diet and activity levels your surgeon allows. The nurse will also find out your pain level and give you medicines as needed.

You are the most important member of your care team. You can speed up your recovery by asking questions when you have them and telling your care team how you are feeling.

If You Go Home the Day of Your Surgery

If you are scheduled to go home the same day as your surgery, you will go from the PACU to the Short Stay Unit. We will take you there on a bed and will help you move from the bed to a recliner chair.

You will still be attached to heart, blood pressure, and oxygen monitors. We check them often to make sure you are OK. We will give you oxygen until your body can keep an oxygen level of 90% or higher.

The nurse will give you medicine for pain and nausea. You can take small sips of water or other clear liquid. The nurse will have you eat some crackers before you take medicines by mouth.

As soon as you are settled in, your family can visit you in your room and stay until you go home.

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Depending on the type of surgery you had, you will probably be ready to go home in 1–2 hours.

If you have problems with pain and nausea for a longer time, you may need to move to a hospital room. We will not send you home unless it is safe.

How We Keep You Safe Before and After Your Surgery

We use at least two methods to make sure we have the correct patient for the correct procedure.

Your surgeon will mark your skin to make sure they operate on the correct place on your body.

We give you antibiotics before your surgery to prevent infection.

We wash our hands before and after meeting with each patient.

How You Help Us Keep You Safe

Tell us about anything that concerns you or seems unsafe.

Call for help whenever you want to get out of bed while you are here. We want to help, we have time, and it is our privilege to assist you.

Follow-Up Phone Call

About 24 to 48 hours after you go home from the hospital or the Short Stay Unit, a nurse will call to see how you are doing. The nurse will ask about your pain and nausea levels and if you can handle fluids and activity.

We will also ask you about the care you got at HCI. Your answers help us recognize and reward staff members who have given exceptional care. If any of the care you received was not satisfactory, please let us know. Your comments help us improve patient care.

If you have problems when you are home after your surgery, call your surgeon's office during regular business hours.

If you have a serious problem after business hours, call 801-581-2121. Give your surgeon's name and ask for the person on call.

For life-threatening emergencies, call 911 and go to the nearest emergency room.

Your Notes
