

Lake of the Woods District Hospital

A Guide to Your Hospital Stay When Having Surgery

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For all your visits and on the day of your surgery, please bring with you:

- **Ontario Health Registration Card**
- **Any other health coverage cards such as provincial, medical or hospital plans. This would include Blue Cross or other private insurance**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO REMEMBER

When your surgeon’s office phones, you should write down:

Name of your doctor: _____

Type of surgery: _____

Surgery Date: _____

Arrival Time to Hospital: _____



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1. WELCOME

You are going to have surgery. This booklet will outline what you need to know to help you get ready for your surgery and prepare you for your stay and discharge. *****These instructions are new and may be different than what you were asked to do if you had surgery before.*****

This booklet provides general information about having surgery. *Contact your surgeon if you have any questions about your care*

Your care team may include surgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses, dietitians, physiotherapists and other health care workers who will help to provide you with the best care.

The information in this booklet is for educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice or instruction of your healthcare provider. *Remember to contact your surgeon if you have any questions about your care.*

2. GETTING READY FOR YOUR SURGERY

Surgery Date and Time

The pre-operative (pre-op) clinic will phone you with the date and time of your surgery.

If there are any changes, the pre-operative office will call you to let you know.

They will give you an **arrival time**. (Note that this is not your actual surgery time).

Please ensure your contact numbers are kept up to date with the office.

Call the pre-op clinic if:

- You need to change your surgery date
- You get a cold, illness or a fever within two days of your planned surgery, as your surgery may need to be changed until you are feeling better.

Your Personal Information

You have been given a Lake of the Woods District Hospital (LWDH) "Surgical Services Patient Assessment and Questionnaire" to fill out. This form helps us to know more about your medical history.

Please fill it out and return it to the pre-op clinic within 3-5 days.

Your Medications

We need to know all medications that you are taking. We also need to know if you take any over the counter medicines including herbal or vitamin pills. There is a chance for a reaction between these and the medicines that may be used while you are in the hospital.

Stop taking herbal and vitamin pills at least 7 days before your surgery unless your surgeon tells you to continue taking them.

Alcohol and Tobacco

It is recommended that you stop drinking alcohol and using tobacco products 4 weeks before your surgery date. There are many resources available to help you. Talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you would like information to help you quit smoking.

Pre-Operative Assessment Clinic

Some patients will need to be seen in the pre-op clinic in the days before their surgery. If you need to be seen, you will be contacted by the surgical team for an appointment.

This is a place where you will meet with a member of the Anesthesiology team so that they can learn more about you and your health, and decide if other tests are needed before you have your surgery. You will also be able to learn about the types of anesthesia you may have during your surgery, as well as plans for pain control after surgery. The pre-operative visit could take up to 2 hours or longer if tests are needed.

We will look more closely at your medication history. At your appointment, we will ask you the name and dose of each medication you take, and how often you take it. Please bring all your medication containers or a detailed list of all the medications you are taking (including over the counter, herbal medications or vitamins). This will allow us to complete a best possible medication history that will be reviewed with you again on your day of surgery.

You should eat and take your usual medication before you come to the clinic unless you have been told not to. A family member or friend is welcome to come with you. If you need an interpreter, please let us know at the time of booking of your appointment so that we can arrange to have one available.

Informed Consent

It's important that you know all about your surgery. After your doctor has explained why you need the surgery and what will be done, you will be asked to sign a consent form saying that you understand your surgery and agree to have it done.

Make sure you ask your doctor all your questions before you sign the form. Surgery will not take place unless the form is signed.

Things you will need to bring during your hospital stay:

- Ontario Health card and any other insurance cards such as Blue Cross
- A copy of your detailed medication list.
- Toothbrush and toothpaste, mouthwash, shampoo. Kleenex®, comb, brush.
- Robe (one that opens all the way) and non-skid slippers or shoes.
- **Two packs of your favourite chewing gum.** Gum will help you recover after your surgery. If you have trouble chewing or swallowing please speak to your doctor.
- Antiembolism stockings if ordered by your doctor.

Other Things you may need to bring during your hospital stay:

- A sleep apnea machine (CPAP) if you use it for sleeping. Label it with your name.
- A denture cup with your name on it, eye glass case & hearing aid(s).
- Your cane, crutches, walker and any other walking aides you may use at home, and may need after your surgery.

3. NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY

- Have a carbohydrate rich (such as potatoes, bread, pasta, bananas, oatmeal) meal or drink. (such as a meal replacement drink)
- Make sure you do not eat anything after midnight the evening prior to your surgery.

4. DAY OF SURGERY

On the day of surgery, please do the following:

At Home

You may drink clear fluids up until 2 hours before your arrival time at the hospital on the day of surgery. A clear liquid is any liquid that you can see through such as:

- Water
- Apple juice
- Cranberry juice
- Clear broth
- Clear tea or coffee ***without milk or cream***. Milk and orange juice are NOT clear fluids and should not be taken.

If you have been told by your doctor to take any pills before your surgery, you may take them with a **sip** of water. Your doctor may ask you to fast (no food or drink) longer based on your medical condition.

For your own safety, your surgery may be cancelled or postponed if you do not follow these guidelines.

Personal Care

- Take a bath or shower. Remove all nail polish.
- Do not wear makeup, lotion, powder, perfume or deodorant.

Contact Lenses

- Take out your contact lenses before surgery and leave them at home. Wear your glasses only.

Medicines

- If you are not sure if you are to take your medicines, please ask your doctor or pre-op clinic.

Valuables

- Do not bring items of value to the hospital. The hospital is not responsible for loss. For safety reasons, all jewelry must be removed before surgery such as rings, chains, watches, and body piercings. If you cannot remove jewelry, it may need to be cut off.

On Arrival to the Hospital

Your safety is important to us. On your day of surgery, you will be asked your name and birthdate often.

On admission, an identification bracelet will be placed on your wrist and you will be told where to go next. There is a surgical waiting room for families to wait while you have surgery. Please ask the team.

Arrival to the Operating Room

In the preoperative area, an intravenous or I.V. (needle in your vein) will be inserted to give you fluids and/or medications before and during your surgery.

Surgical Safety Checklist

Before your operation, the surgeon, nurses and anesthetist will do a safety check in the operating room with you. If you have further questions, you may ask them at this time.

Anesthesia helps keep you pain free during surgery. *There are many types of anesthesia used including:*

General Anesthesia: means that you are given drugs to keep you deeply 'asleep' during your surgery. Sometimes a tube is put into your throat to help you breathe during your surgery. Tell your nurse or doctor if you have any loose teeth, dental caps and /or bridgework. The hospital is not responsible for any injury to dental work or teeth.

Local Anesthesia: means that you are given a drug, commonly called 'freezing'. Local anesthetics 'block' the feeling of pain from the site of surgery. Although you are awake for the surgery, you may be given some drugs through your IV to relax you.

Regional Anesthesia: (spinal, epidural, or nerve block) means that you are given an injection of a drug close to a group of nerves to 'freeze' the whole area where you are having surgery. Although you are awake, you may be given some drugs to relax you. The freezing will last for a few hours. The nurses will check often to make sure the freezing has worn off, before you get up.

Some drugs may stay in your body for up to 24 hours. The side effects of these drugs can change your short term memory, judgement and response time. You may feel sick to your stomach (nauseated) from these drugs. You can be given medicines that will lessen this feeling.

5. AFTER YOUR SURGERY

Recovery Room

After your surgery is over, you will be taken to a recovery area. You will be very sleepy. Nurses will be checking on you every few minutes.

You will have an I.V. to give you fluid and medicine. You will be given medicine to help lessen the nausea and pain. Please tell the nurse if your pain changes or gets worse. Patients usually stay in recovery for one to two hours. Visitors are not allowed in this area. When ready for discharge from the recovery area you may go to either:

Inpatient Unit

Your nurse will continue to check on you often. You may be given medication for pain if you need it.

If you go home the same day that you have surgery, you will need to arrange to have a responsible adult available to come to the hospital and take you home, either by car or taxi. *You cannot drive yourself home after surgery.* Please arrange to have a responsible person stay with you overnight after your surgery.

The drugs used to put you to sleep or to relax you during your surgery stay in your body for 24 hours.

In the 24 hours after your surgery, do not:

- Drink any alcohol
- Take any pills that will make you feel sleepy. Check with your doctor if you are unsure.
- Drive a car, use machinery, power tools or appliances
- Make major decisions or sign legal papers.

6. YOUR HOSPITAL STAY

Laying in bed without moving may cause many problems like pneumonia, blood clots and muscle weakness. It will also slow down your recovery. The more often you get up, the better you will feel! Please ask for help if needed.

Pain Control After Surgery

There is some pain after most surgeries. The amount and kind of pain will depend on the surgery that you have had. Managing your pain after surgery will help you get better faster.

Deep Breathing and Coughing

You need to take deep breaths and cough often to keep your lungs clear of fluid and mucus after surgery. Practice these deep breathing and coughing exercises at home.

Take a deep breath in through your nose, slowly and as deeply as you can. Then breathe out through your mouth. Do this 6-8 times.

If your surgery will be in your abdomen, start by bending your legs up and use your hands or a pillow to apply gentle support over your wound.

Take a deep breath, and then give a good strong cough 2-3 times.

Exercise and Activity

With the help from health care workers or your family members, you will:

- Sit up in a chair for all your meals.
- Be out of bed often, either walking or sitting in a chair.
- Do deep breathing exercises.

You will be taught (and helped) how to get out of bed safely and walk on your day of surgery. These activities will help your body to heal and return to normal.

Food and Drink

After your surgery, you can eat and drink, as you feel ready. (unless your doctor tells you otherwise)

- Always sit in a chair at mealtimes, even if you eat very little.
- Chew one stick of gum, for 5 minutes 3 times each day before or after meals. This will help you to pass gas.
- Tell the nurse if you feel nauseated or if you feel bloated.

7. GOING HOME

Please arrange to have a responsible adult to pick you up when you are discharged home. The patient care team will provide information about how to care for yourself when you are at home. You may be given a prescription if needed. You will be told when to make an appointment to follow up with your doctor.

Contact us in the Preoperative clinic

(807)468-9861 ext. 2459

preopclinic@lwdh.on.ca