

## DAYS OR WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY:

- ▶ Talk with your surgeon about why you need surgery, how it might help you and whether there are other options.
- ▶ Bring an up-to-date list of all medications and dosages, including over-the-counter medicines, supplements, and herbals, you take. Talk to your surgeon about why you take each medication and how it helps. Ask if there are any medicines (even over-the-counter) that you should not take before your surgery.
- ▶ Let the surgeon know if you are allergic to any medication and what happens when you take it.
- ▶ Discuss with your surgeon if you are being treated for chronic pain.
- ▶ Tell the surgeon if you have diabetes or high blood sugar.
- ▶ Tell your surgeon if you have heart problems or if you're taking any heart medication.
- ▶ Depending on your surgery, you may be scheduled for a visit with an anesthesiologist. Tell your anesthesiologist about prior anesthesia experiences for you and for those within your family. Discuss your medical conditions and how they might affect your anesthetic options and your post operative pain management recommendations with your anesthesiologist.
- ▶ Inform your anesthesiologist if you have been previously told that you have a "difficult airway."
- ▶ Talk to your surgeon about your anticipated discharge plan.
- ▶ Arrange for a responsible person to care for children at home.
- ▶ Make arrangements for a responsible adult to assist in caring for you upon your return home.
- ▶ Try and refrain from smoking (or smoke less).

## THE DAY OR NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY:

- ▶ Do **NOT** shave near where you will have surgery. Shaving can irritate your skin, which may lead to infection. If you are a man who shaves your face every day, ask the surgeon if it is okay to do so.
- ▶ Keep warm. This means wearing warm clothes or wrapping up in blankets when you go to the hospital. In cold weather, it also means heating up the car before you get in. Keeping warm before surgery lowers your chances of getting an infection.
- ▶ Shower and wash your hair. Follow any instructions provided on use of an antimicrobial soap. Do not use hair spray or other hair styling products. Remove any nail polish on your fingers and toes and do not wear make-up. Your caregivers need to see your skin and nails to check your blood circulation.
- ▶ Follow all pre-surgery instructions carefully. You will probably be asked to stop eating the night before surgery. You may be instructed to stop taking regular medicines or you may be given a special medication or solution to drink before you go to the hospital.

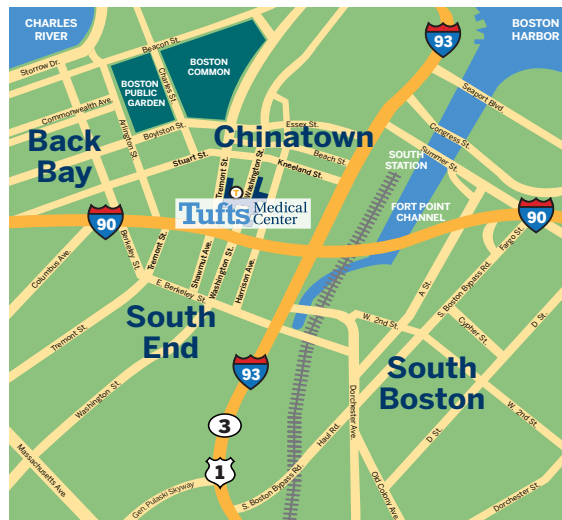
## THE DAY OF SURGERY:

- ▶ Do not eat or drink anything, unless otherwise instructed by your physician.
- ▶ Wear loose fitting clothing and low heeled comfortable shoes.
- ▶ Remove all jewelry, including rings and body piercings. Swelling may occur in your hands during surgery. Your rings may become too tight, which could affect the circulation in your fingers. Notify the nurse in advance if you have any questions or concerns.
- ▶ Leave your contact lenses at home and bring eyeglasses.
- ▶ Bring your crutches or walker or any other assistive device with you.
- ▶ Bring the name and telephone number of the responsible adult that will be escorting you home.

- ▶ Bring your blue hospital card and insurance card.
- ▶ If you have a health care proxy or advance directive, bring it with you.
- ▶ Bring your medication list to the hospital with you.
- ▶ If you have not been evaluated by an anesthesiologist prior, you will meet a member of your anesthesia care team to examine you and discuss your anesthetic and pain treatment options.
- ▶ Do not bring any valuables, such as jewelry, credit cards, checkbooks or large amounts of cash, with you.
- ▶ You will be asked to sign an informed consent. Read it carefully. Make sure everything on the form is correct. Make sure all of your questions have been answered. If you do not understand something on the form, ask someone to explain.
- ▶ The staff may ask you the same questions many times. They will ask: your name, what kind of surgery you are having, and the part of your body to be operated on. This is for your safety.
- ▶ Inform your surgeon and/or anesthesiologist if you have been previously told that you have a "difficult airway."
- ▶ A health care worker might mark the spot on your body to be operated on. Make sure they mark only the correct part and nowhere else.
- ▶ Marking usually happens when you are awake. If you cannot be awake for the marking, an authorized individual will assist in the marking process.
- ▶ Your surgeon will take a "time out" just before surgery. This is done to make sure they are doing the right surgery on the right body part on the right person.
- ▶ Occasionally, emergency cases arise which cause unplanned delays. We apologize in advance for any wait you may experience and ask for your patience.

## AFTER YOUR SURGERY:

- ▶ You will be taken to the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). This is an open room with many patients awakening from anesthesia. Visitors are generally not allowed in the Inpatient PACU. Discuss any questions or concerns with your nurse.
- ▶ You will be observed closely until you recover from anesthesia. Your heart rate and blood pressure will be monitored and you will have an oxygen mask.
- ▶ The staff in the PACU will ask you a lot of questions to find out how alert you are and if you are having pain or nausea.
- ▶ The staff will ask you to rate your pain on a scale of 0-10 (with 0 being no pain and 10 being the most). Tell the staff about your pain so they can help relieve it.
- ▶ Ask questions about new medicines that are given to you. What is it? What is it for? If you have more questions about a medication, talk to your doctor or nurse before taking it.
- ▶ You will need instructions about what to do when you leave the hospital. This may include medications, therapy, how to care for your surgery site, and activities to avoid. Be sure to follow these instructions carefully, including when and who to call if you think you are having a problem. This helps reduce the risk of infection and, if you get an infection, allows for it to be taken care of early.
- ▶ **You must have a responsible adult escort you home if you are having any type of sedation or anesthesia.**



Tufts Medical Center is easily accessible by car from the Massachusetts Turnpike (Route 90), the Central Artery and the Southeast Expressway (Route 93). Tufts Medical Center is located in downtown Boston, in Chinatown and the Theater District and within walking distance of the Boston Common, Downtown Crossing and many hotels and restaurants. For directions, visit [www.tuftsmedicalcenter.org/AboutUs/Directions](http://www.tuftsmedicalcenter.org/AboutUs/Directions).

# Preparing for Your Surgery

## Instructions



**Tufts** Medical Center

800 Washington Street  
Boston, MA 02111  
617-636-5000

[www.tuftsmedicalcenter.org](http://www.tuftsmedicalcenter.org)

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