

Nephrectomy



UHN

Information for Patients

You are having the following type of nephrectomy:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donor | <input type="checkbox"/> Laparoscopic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nephroureterectomy | <input type="checkbox"/> Partial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radical | <input type="checkbox"/> Simple |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TGH | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TWH | |

What is a Nephrectomy?

A Nephrectomy is an operation to take out part of or all of a kidney. You may be having the kidney removed because:

- you have benign or malignant tumours
- your kidney does not work
- your kidney will be used in a transplant.

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University Health Network
Toronto General Hospital Toronto Western Hospital Princess Margaret Hospital

What happens before your operation?

- You have an appointment in the pre-admission department.
- We test your blood, do an ECG (electrocardiogram) and/or a chest x-ray to prepare you for the operation.
- You will meet with the Preadmission Nurse who goes over basic information about the operation with you.
- You might also meet with an anesthetist and/or a medical doctor during this appointment.
- We teach you how to do deep breathing and coughing exercises and a special exercise called Incentive Spirometry. Doing these exercises after your operation will help get air into your lungs and decrease your chances of getting pneumonia.

What to do the day before your operation

- The evening before your operation, drink fluids only. Do not eat anything.
- After midnight the night before your operation, don't eat or drink anything. Your stomach has to be empty for the operation.
- For some types of surgery we require that you take a laxative. If you have been given a laxative, take it the day before your operation. We will give you instructions on how to take the laxative.

What to do the morning of your operation

- **TGH:** Surgical Admission Unit (2nd floor NCSB) 2 hours before your scheduled operation time.
TWH: Surgical Admission Unit (2nd floor EC) 2 hours before your scheduled operation time.
- A nurse will prepare you for surgery.
- We will give you an intravenous (IV). This is a small needle that we put in a vein in your arm. We use it to give you 1 or all of the following:
 - fluids (especially if donating a kidney)
 - antibiotics
 - pain medication

What to expect after your operation

You will wake up in the Post Anesthetic Care Unit (PACU). (Once you are stable, we will take you back to the Nursing floor.)

When you wake up, you will be attached to some tubes:

- an **IV** – This tube is taken out when you can drink again comfortably.
- a **Jackson Pratt (JP)** – You will have a JP if your operation was a partial nephrectomy or a nephroureterectomy. The JP is a



tube that we put in your abdomen (stomach area) to drain any extra fluid from there after your operation. We usually take it out 3 - 4 days after the operation.

- **oxygen** – We usually give patients oxygen while they are still in the PACU. We use either nasal prongs or a clear plastic mask.
- a **catheter** – This tube goes up your urethra into your bladder to drain urine. It also helps us see how much urine you are producing.

We usually take it out 1 - 2 days after your surgery.

How you will feel

- We will use medication to help you control your pain. We will give you Patient Controlled Anesthesia (PCA—this is a pump that you control yourself), or an epidural. We have information pamphlets on these methods of pain relief.
- A few days after your operation, you will probably start to have gas pain. The best thing to do is walk. Don't eat or drink anything while you have this pain.
- You might feel some nausea or dizziness because of the drugs we give you for pain relief. We will give you medication for these problems.

How to take care of yourself right after the operation

- The first day after your operation, you should walk. A nurse will help you.
- You need to start some deep breathing, coughing, and Incentive Spirometry exercises. A nurse will help you.
- Wiggle your toes while you are in bed. This will help keep the blood flowing to your legs.
- Take showers instead of baths. A nurse will help you shower while you are in the hospital.

How long you will be in the hospital

You can usually go home in 2 - 5 days, dependant on the type of operation you have had.

Your follow-up appointment

- We will give you an appointment to see your urologist 6 weeks after surgery.
- If you have donated a kidney, you will also have to make an appointment to see your nephrologist in 3 months after surgery.

How to take care of yourself when you go home

- Begin your regular activities when you feel able.
Please note: You will get tired easily.
- Keep your bowels regular and prevent constipation by:



- Eating foods that are high in bulk (for example bran, fruits, vegetables). This will help to keep your bowels regular and prevent constipation.
- Drinking lots of fluids.
- Using mild laxatives like Metamucil, Prodiom, or Milk of Magnesia if you need them. They are available at a pharmacy without a prescription.
- Don't drive for 2 weeks after your operation.
- Don't lift anything heavier than 5 kg (10 lbs.) for the next 4 - 6 weeks. For example, don't carry groceries or lift children, pets, etc.

When to call your doctor or the Nursing Station

- your temperature goes higher than 38°C and/or you feel chills
- your urine has blood in it and does not clear after increasing drinking fluids
- you have redness or pain where your incision is
- you have redness or pain at port sites from laparoscopic surgery or at incision area with the open nephrectomy.

Important:

Go to your nearest emergency department if you have pain, redness, or swelling in your calf or leg.

How to contact us:

Toronto General Hospital

Nursing Unit 6A West	416-340-3521
Dr. Finelli	416-946-2851
Dr. Fleshner	416-946-2989
Dr. Jewett	416-946-2909
Dr. Robinette	416-340-3855
Dr. Trachtenberg	416-946-2100

Toronto Western Hospital

Combined Surgical Unit 6Fell	416-603-5830
Dr. Hassouna	416-603-1961
Dr. Radomski	416-603-5713

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