

Part 1

My Surgery

Information that is right for you helps you make decisions about your health.

This part of the guide has specific information about your surgery including:

- Preparing for my surgery
- Important things to remember

Your surgeon may give you more information. Please add it to this part of your guide.

Preparing for my surgery

What can I do to get ready for my surgery?

Here are ways to take care of both your body and your mind so you are ready for your surgery:

- Stay as active as you are able to.
- A balanced diet is important. Try to eat healthy foods before your surgery.
- Call your family doctor or surgeon if you have medical concerns.
- Your health care team wants to make sure you have the right medications and treatment before and after your surgery.
 - Let your surgeon know if you drink alcohol or use any recreational tobacco (smoking or vaping). The reason we ask if you smoke or drink is because it could affect your recovery. We want to support you to have a safe and successful recovery.
 - If you feel safe disclosing this information to the team, we can provide information on how to safely manage these substances while recovering from surgery. If you're interested in smoking cessation programs, the team can suggest some.
- Tell your medical team if you are taking blood thinners, herbal medicines or other substances.
 - Examples of blood thinners are Coumadin® (Warfarin), Aspirin® or Plavix® and Vitamin E.
 - Some over-the-counter medications may cause side effects. Let your medical team know about anything you are taking.
- Keep taking all your usual medications unless your health care team tells you otherwise.
- Shower or bathe the night before and the morning of surgery to help clean your skin and lower your risk of infection after surgery.



Planning after your surgery — Start early!

It is important to plan ahead for when you leave the hospital (also known as being “discharged”), even before your surgery day. Planning early for your discharge can help you feel less worried and anxious.

You may be told the same day that you will be discharged. Whenever possible, we will let you know you are going to be discharged before the actual date, but sometimes we might not know until the same day. If you have any questions, talk to a member of your health care team.

Here's what you can do before coming to the hospital for your surgery:

Arrange for someone to help you leave the hospital or help you transition to your next location or place of residence. The health care team will contact that person when you are ready to be picked up.

1. Arrange for someone to help you at your residence after your surgery. Depending on your surgery, you may need help for a few days or a few weeks. You will need help with things like laundry, cleaning, cooking and grocery shopping.
2. Ask someone to help you look after the people or pets in your care. Try to plan this before coming to the hospital for surgery.
3. Make your meals ahead of time.
4. Ask your surgeon or other health care provider:
 - When can I return to my usual activities, such as cooking, driving, cleaning, exercising or doing yard work?

How can I help the health care team plan for my discharge?

Talk to your health care team (surgeon, nurse or social worker) about your needs and worries. We will try to help with any concerns you have about leaving the hospital.

How can my caregivers be involved in my care?

UHN is limiting who can enter the hospital or visit on hospital property to lower the risk of spreading COVID-19 to patients and the staff who care for them.

We know that family, friends and others who support you are important for your recovery. Although we are not able to let them join you at the hospital at this time, we will do our best to include them in your care.

Only approved **Essential Care Partners** can enter the hospital or visit on hospital property at this time. An Essential Care Partner is a support person who is very important to the safety and well-being of a patient while they are in the hospital. An Essential Care Partner might be a family member, friend, neighbour, paid private caregiver or someone else.

Your Essential Care Partner can, with your permission:

- Share information with your health care team that will help us meet your needs. At UHN, many nursing teams give reports to each other at the patient's bedside. See page 41 for information about how you and your caregivers can take part.
- Help you and your health care team make decisions about your care.
- Help with your care at the hospital and after surgery.
- Bring you food from home, but please check with your nurse or dietitian first. You may have special needs after surgery.
- Help prevent the spread of germs by washing hands before entering and leaving the hospital, and when entering and leaving a patient room. Hand sanitizer can be found in all areas of the hospital.



For more information about our visitor policy during the COVID-19 pandemic please speak with a member of your health care team or see the [UHN COVID-19 page](https://www.uhn.ca/covid19#) (<https://www.uhn.ca/covid19#>).

Please note: Patient and visitor lounges on inpatient units are closed during COVID-19.

Essential Care Partners must check themselves for signs of illness before coming to visit. If they are sick, they should stay at home and visit you when they feel better. See page 9 for more information.



Where can my Essential Care Partner and I stay near the hospital?

To get a list of nearby places to stay, check the UHN website:

- Go to www.uhn.ca
- Click "Patients & Families"
- Click "Visiting patients" under "Quick Links"
- Click "Places to Stay" and then "Accommodations and Places to Stay"

Some hotels may offer a reduced rate for patients of the hospital and their families. Ask the Pre-Admission Clinic for a letter to give to the hotel to qualify for possible discounted rates.

UHN cares about patient safety

Protecting yourself and your Essential Care Partner from spreading infections when at our hospital

It is important that you and your Essential Care Partner feel well before coming to the hospital. If you or your Essential Care Partner experience any of the symptoms below, you may make other patients or health care workers in the hospital sick.

Self-screening

Before coming to the hospital, check for any of these symptoms in the past 24 hours:



- A new cough or a cough that is getting worse
- A fever (above 38 °C or 100 °F), or chills, or both
- Diarrhea
- Shortness of breath (worse than usual)
- Severe headache (worse than usual)
- Muscle aches
- Extreme fatigue or feeling very tired
- Vomiting (throwing up)
- Sore throat
- New rash

If you have any of these symptoms and you are having surgery soon, call your surgeon's office right away. Your surgeon will give you more instructions.

If your visitors have any of these symptoms, ask them not come to the hospital to visit you. Your visitors can come to see you when they feel better.

When you arrive at the hospital, you will be screened again for symptoms

All patients and Essential Care Partners must wear an approved medical mask at all times while in the hospital.

- Entrance screening staff will give you a mask and explain how to put it on properly. They will only give 1 mask per day.
- If you are wearing a mask from home, staff will give you a medical mask to wear instead. Always put your reusable mask in a bag after removing it.
- Make sure the mask covers **both your nose and mouth** at all times.
- You may remove your mask to eat or drink. Clean your hands first and remove it carefully. Do not touch your face. Always use clean hands when putting on or taking off your mask.
- Continue to maintain physical distancing (2 metres) inside the hospital.
- If you are a patient who has a legitimate medical condition that prevents you from wearing a mask, contact your UHN doctor or nurse practitioner's office before your appointment. If your exemption is approved, you will receive a Face Mask Exemption Form. You must show this form to the entrance screeners when you come to the hospital. You will be given a face shield to wear instead.



Important things to remember

My surgery

- Call your surgeon right away if you feel sick before coming for your surgery.
- Know that your Essential Care Partner can be with you and help in your care while you are at UHN.
- Ask for a list of hotels where your Essential Care Partner can stay while you are in hospital. Or, go to www.uhn.ca.
- Check with the nursing unit staff about the visiting policy on the unit or see the [UHN COVID-19 page](https://www.uhn.ca/covid19#) (<https://www.uhn.ca/covid19#>).
- Plan early for when you leave the hospital.
- Someone **must** take you to your place of residence after your surgery.
- Arrange for someone to help you once you leave the hospital.