

## 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:

- Think positively!
- 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.
- Be open and honest with your health care team:
  - Tell your surgeon if you smoke or drink alcohol. Be honest about how much you smoke or drink because it can affect your recovery after your surgery.
  - If you smoke, try to quit. If you can't quit, smoke less. Smoking irritates your lungs, so smokers have more breathing problems after surgery.
  - Ask your Pre-Admission Clinic team about smoking cessation programs.
- Tell your medical team if you are taking blood thinners, herbal medicines or street drugs.
  - 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.



## Planning to go home 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 return home will help you feel less worried and anxious.

You may be told the morning of that day you may be discharged home. Whenever possible, we will let you know you are going home 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 healthcare team.

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

### **Arrange for someone to take you home from the hospital.**

1. Arrange for someone to help you at home 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:
  - When can I drive again?
  - When can I return to work?
  - When can I return to my usual activities like cleaning, exercising or doing laundry?

### **How can I help the health care team plan for my return home?**

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 going home.

### **How can my family be involved in my care?**

Your family can:

- 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 more information about how you and your family can take part.
- Help you and your health care team make decisions about your care.

- Come with you when you have tests or clinic appointments in the hospital.
- Help with your care at the hospital and at home.
- Bring you food from home, but please check with your nurse or dietitian first. You may have special needs after surgery.
- Help keep you safe by washing their hands before entering and leaving the hospital, and when entering and leaving a patient room. Hand sanitizers are found in all areas of the hospital.



Please note: Each floor has a visitor's lounge or waiting room

Family and friends and other visitors 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 family and I stay near the hospital?

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

- Go to [www.uhn.ca](http://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.

## Visiting hours

We know that visitors are important for your recovery. UHN has an open visiting policy, and patient visiting is welcomed at all times; unless you, your doctor, or the unit manager requests restrictions on visitation. Check with nursing staff about any exceptions that may be in place during your admission.

# UHN cares about patient safety

## Protecting yourself, your family and friends from spreading infections when at our hospital

It is important to make sure that you and your visitors feel well before coming to the hospital. If you or your visitors are sick, 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)

**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.**



## Important things to remember

### My surgery

- Call your surgeon right away if you feel sick before coming for your surgery.
- Know that your family, friends or caregiver can be with you and help in your care while you are at UHN.
- Ask for a list of hotels where your family or friends can stay while you are in hospital. Or, go to [www.uhn.ca](http://www.uhn.ca).
- Check with the nursing unit staff about the visiting policy on the unit.
- Plan early for your return home.
- Someone **must** take you home after your surgery.
- Arrange for someone to help you once you return home.

