

# Surgery at Toronto General Hospital and Princess Margaret Cancer Centre:

What you need to know before your surgery

## **Pre-Admission Clinic at Toronto General Hospital, University Health Network**

Read this guide to learn about:

- How to prepare for surgery
- What to expect during and after surgery
- What to do before you leave the hospital
- What to expect during your recovery



My surgery date: \_\_\_\_\_

My surgeon: \_\_\_\_\_

Where to go for my surgery:

Toronto General Hospital  
Norman Urquhart Building – 2nd Floor,  
Surgical Admission Unit (see map on page 5)

Princess Margaret Cancer Centre  
18B, Short Term Care Unit

Arrive at the hospital **2 hours** before your surgery

Where I will go after my surgery: \_\_\_\_\_

## Your surgery date and time

Toronto General Hospital responds to life-threatening emergencies. Sometimes we need to delay or reschedule surgeries due to emergencies. If this happens, your surgeon's team will do their best to reschedule your surgery and call you with a new date and time.

If there are **any changes in your health or you are feeling unwell** before your surgery, call your surgeon's office as soon as possible.

## What to eat and drink before your surgery

### For all patients having surgery:

- Do not drink alcohol for 24 hours before your surgery.
- You may brush your teeth on the morning of surgery. Do not swallow any water.
- On the day of your surgery, you can drink clear liquids such as water, apple juice or ginger-ale **up to 4 hours before your surgery, unless your health care team has given you different instructions.**

For example, if your surgery is booked for 11:00 am, you may drink clear fluids up until 7:00 am.

### Fasting guidelines for the day before your surgery:

Your health care team will tell you which guideline to follow. If you are not sure, please ask.

#### **Guideline 1: Light meal allowed evening before surgery**

- Have a light meal the evening before your surgery. Avoid fried food.
- **Do not eat any solid food after midnight** (12:00 am) the night before your surgery.

#### **Guideline 2: Clear fluids only on the entire day before surgery**

- **Do not have any solid food** for the entire day before your surgery. You can have **clear liquids only.**

## Getting ready for your surgery

### Bowel preparation

Your surgeon's office will tell you which of the following instructions you need to follow:

- No bowel preparation is needed
- Fleet enema between 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm the night before your surgery
- CoLyte
- Moviprep

### Taking your medications before your surgery

On the morning of your surgery:



**Take** these medications with a sip of water:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol) before your surgery to manage your pain, if needed.

Bring all your eye drops, puffers and prescription creams to the hospital.



**Stop** taking these medications before your surgery:

- All vitamins, supplements, herbals and naturopathic medications for 7 days
- Acetylsalicylic acid (ASA) for 7 days (unless your health care team gives you different instructions)
- Naproxen (Aleve), Ibuprofen (Advil) or both for 7 days
- Anticoagulants (blood thinners) as follows: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

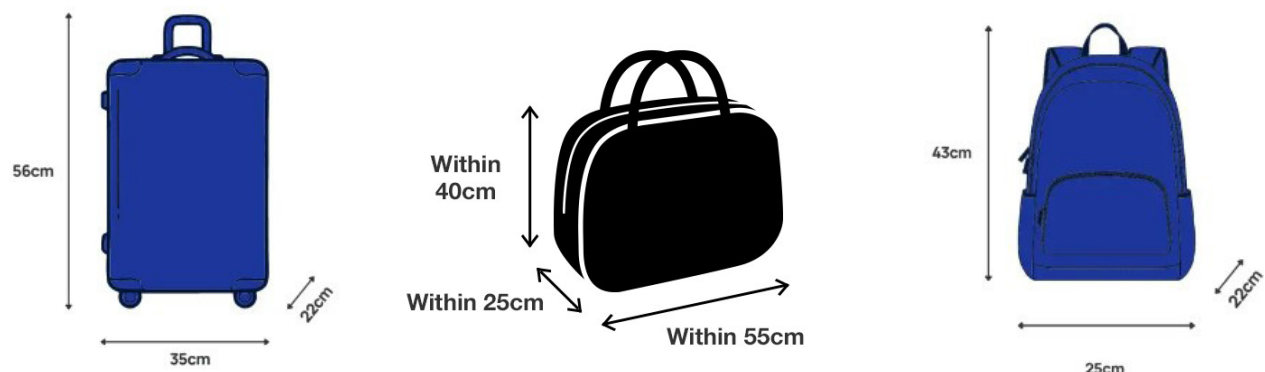
## Smoking and your surgery

Do NOT smoke on the day of your surgery.

To improve your recovery after surgery, we strongly advise that you stop smoking for as long as possible before your surgery.

## What to bring on the day of your surgery

- Ontario Health card (OHIP)
- Protective cases for eyeglasses, hearing aids and dentures
- CPAP machine, if you need one.
- Slippers or shoes with non-skid soles
- Toiletries, including toothbrush and toothpaste
- 2 bags: 1 for shoes and 1 for all belongings including what you wear to the hospital. Bags with a zipper are preferred to keep your belongings safe. This may include small duffel bags, backpacks or any other bag you would like. Examples with sizes are:



Note: There are no patient lockers. Your family or caregiver will be given your belongings to carry with them until after the surgery.

## **What NOT to bring on the day of your surgery:**

- × Any food or beverages
- × Valuables or jewelry
- × Pillows
- × Large suitcases
- × UHN is a scent free hospital. Do not wear or bring in perfume, scented lotions or sprays to the hospital.

If you need additional items, please ask friends, family members or caregivers to bring them to the hospital when you are settled in your room after your surgery. Please limit what you bring to the hospital.

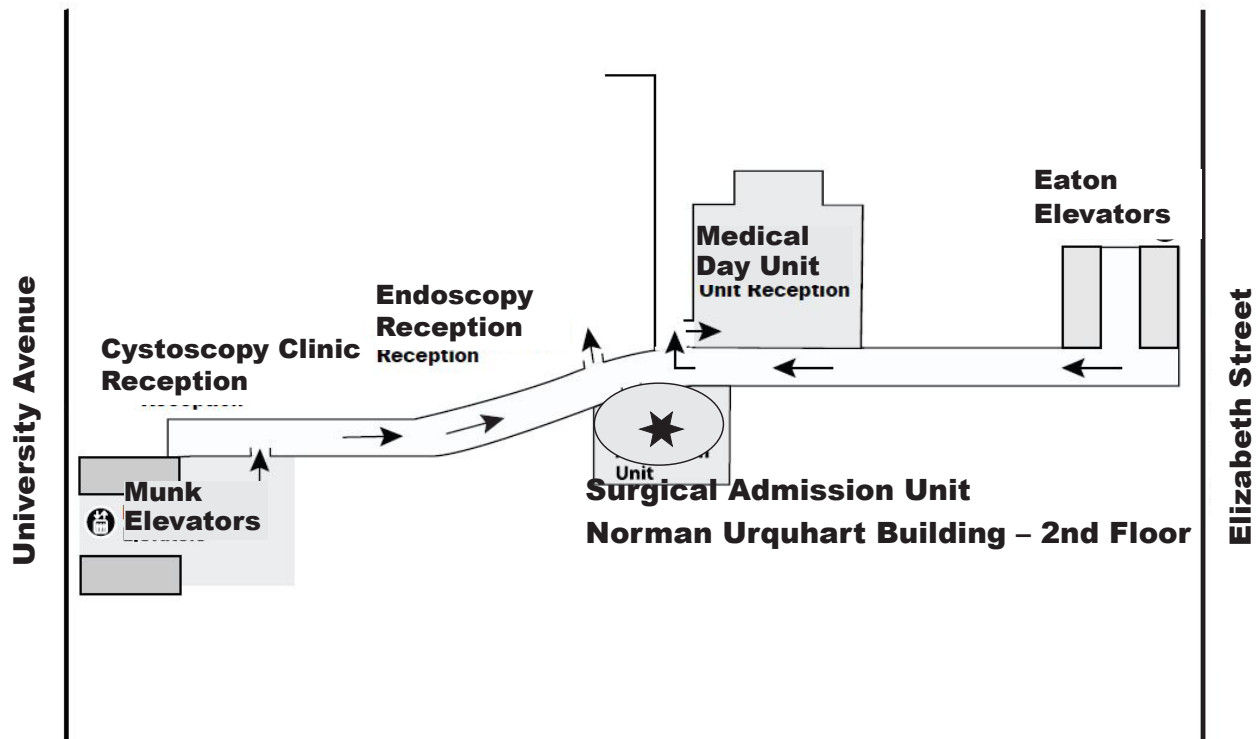
Remove:

- All rings and jewelry. If you are unable to remove your rings, have a jeweler remove them or cut them off
- All body piercings
- Nail polish, shellac, gel or artificial nails from your hands
- Make-up
- Contact lenses (wear your glasses to the hospital)
- Tampons — use a sanitary pad if necessary

**UHN is not responsible for lost or stolen items.**

## Where to go on the day of your surgery

### Peter Munk Building – 2nd Floor (use Eaton or Munk elevators)



## Arriving at the hospital

- You need to arrive **2 hours before your surgery** or as instructed.
- If you are late, your surgery may be cancelled.
- The receptionist will register with your Ontario Health Card.
- You will be shown to an area to get changed into a hospital gown and brought to the patient holding area before your surgery.

## **Patient Holding Area**

- A Registered Nurse checks your vital signs (blood pressure, pulse, temperature, and breathing) and blood sugar, if needed. We ask you some health questions for safety.
- A member of your health care team starts an intravenous (IV) in your arm before your surgery.
- You then see your surgeon and members of the surgical team, as well as your anesthesiologist.
- One or 2 family members or essential care partners may be able to stay with you in the holding area before surgery.
- When the operating room is ready for you, a team member will bring you in.
- Once inside the operating room, your family and friends are asked to leave. They are shown where they can wait until your surgery is finished.

## **Operating room**

- Once you are in the operating room, you are helped onto the operating table.
- A blood pressure cuff is placed on your arm, an oxygen monitor on your finger, and a heart monitor is placed on your chest.
- You receive anesthetic medicine.



## **After Your Surgery**

### **Post-Anesthetic Care Unit (PACU)**

#### **For patients NOT having heart surgery:**

- When your surgery is over, you are transferred into the Post-Anesthetic Care Unit (PACU).
- You recover in the PACU from the early effects of your surgery and anesthesia.
- The PACU is a large room with several other patients where your nurses monitor you.
- You may have an oxygen mask over your mouth and nose.
- You are treated for any pain or nausea.
- You may be in the PACU for 30 minutes to 2 hours depending on your surgery. One family member may be allowed for a short visit before you transfer to the Inpatient unit.
- When you have recovered, you are transferred to your assigned room on the Inpatient unit.

#### **For patients having heart surgery procedures or some vascular procedures**

- If you are having heart surgery procedures or certain vascular procedures, you may be taken either to the PACU for the first 60 to 90 minutes or directly into the Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit (CVICU).
- Your nurse is in a room with you and checks on you often.
- You are treated for any pain or nausea.
- Two family members may be allowed for short visits.
- When you have recovered, you will be transferred to your assigned room on the Inpatient unit.

## **Recovering from your surgery**

### **The Surgical Nursing Unit or Inpatient Unit**

- You complete your recovery from your surgery in your assigned room.
- The nursing staff will continue to monitor your condition and progress. You receive medication to manage your pain as you need it.
- Many members of the health care team will take part in your care to meet your needs during your stay in hospital.

### **Exercises after your surgery**

To prevent complications after your surgery, do the following exercises:

- Take 5 to 10 deep breaths every hour when you are awake.
- Do a splinted cough to clear secretions from your lungs, as needed (hold a pillow tightly to your chest or abdomen, then cough).
- Leg exercises, including ankle pumping and leg slides, 5 to 10 times every hour when you are awake.
- Get up and walk as much as you can as directed by your nursing team.
  - Talk to your nursing team about using your medications to manage any pain you may have so that you can get up comfortably
  - To prevent a fall, ask for help if you feel weak or dizzy. Wear non-skid slippers or shoes when walking and use any devices that your team has asked you to.

## Leaving the hospital

When you are discharged from the hospital, we will give you instructions specific to your surgery, which may include:

- driving restrictions
- how much weight is safe to lift
- when to go back to work
- directions for follow-up appointments after your surgery
- prescriptions for medications, if needed

Your health care team may also give you other special instructions that you will need before you go home.



**If you have questions or concerns about your surgery, call your surgeon's office.**

## myUHN Patient Portal

[myUHN Patient Portal](#) is a secure website for patients of University Health Network (UHN). This website lets you see your appointments and test results from all UHN sites as soon as they are ready.

With myUHN, you can access your personal health record from anywhere, at any time, using your computer, smartphone or tablet.

If you are interested in accessing your personal UHN health record online, ask pre-admission staff for a myUHN registration code.

For more information, visit: [www.uhn.ca/PatientsFamilies/myUHN](http://www.uhn.ca/PatientsFamilies/myUHN)

## Where to find more health information

The TGH and Princess Margaret Patient and Family Libraries provide patients and their families with access to good quality, up-to-date health information.

Find information on many health conditions, tests and treatments, community resources and more. You can also use the Internet to find information on your own, or have our Librarian do a tailored search just for you.

### **Toronto General Hospital Patient and Family Learning Centre/Library**

585 University Avenue, Level 1 – Upper Munk Lobby

Phone: 416 340 4800 ext. 5951

Email: [tgpen@uhn.ca](mailto:tgpen@uhn.ca)

Monday – Friday 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Closed on weekends and holidays

### **Princess Margaret Cancer Centre Patient & Family Library**

610 University Avenue, Main Floor

Phone: 416 946 4501 ext. 5383

Email: [patienteducation@uhn.ca](mailto:patienteducation@uhn.ca)

Monday – Friday 9 am to 4:00 pm

Closed on weekends and holidays

Visit [www.uhnpatienteducation.ca](http://www.uhnpatienteducation.ca) and select “More about our Libraries”.

For more information about surgery at UHN visit [www.uhnsurgery.ca](http://www.uhnsurgery.ca).



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