Preparing for your Surgery

At Advocate Lutheran General Hospital, we’re very pleased that you and your physician have selected us to provide your surgical care. We feel privileged to have you as our patient and are dedicated to providing you with excellent care without exception. Advocate Lutheran General Hospital is dedicated to providing care that is the best for patients to heal.

If you have any questions after you review the material, please contact the Pre-Surgical Testing Unit at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital at 847-723-7372.

Your surgical experience at Lutheran General Hospital starts after we get a call from your surgeon’s scheduler.

The following is important information to prepare for your surgery. Please review the following steps:

**STEP ONE: Pre-registration, Insurance Verification, Pre-Authorization or Pre-Certification** must happen **before your surgery**. The telephone number for Patient Registration is 847-723-1900.

- The Patient Registration Department will call you to gather your insurance information.
- You may also call the Patient Registration Department to provide insurance information as soon as your surgery is scheduled.
- Many surgeries and procedures require pre-authorization / pre-certification.
- Please be sure that the office staff is contacting your insurance company for pre-authorization / pre-certification.
- Unauthorized services could result in non-payment by your insurance company. If you do not pre-authorize / pre-certify before testing and procedures, you may be financially responsible for the entire bill.
- We look forward to making your registration for surgery smooth and appreciate your partnership.
- Once again, the telephone number for Patient Registration is **847-723-1900**. Please be sure to complete this very important first step!

In addition, some care providers who may be part of the surgery team are not employed by Advocate Health Care, such as anesthesiologists, and may have separate contracts with managed care plans. Your coverage for these services may be different than the coverage for the hospital. Please check with your insurance carrier.

**STEP TWO: A pre-surgical nurse may perform a patient health history** by a phone call or visit. This history provides important information used to properly prepare you, and ease the admission process on the day of surgery.
• The Patient Registration Department may schedule a NURSING telephone interview after gathering your insurance information.
• Please have a list of your medications, surgeries, and physicians seen on a regular basis (including phone number) ready for the nurse interview appointment. The name and phone number of your pharmacy is also important.

NOTE: Your doctor may provide you with a tentative time for surgery.

• This time may change before your surgery date.
• Please do not schedule anything on the day of surgery.

STEP THREE: The day before your surgery after 1 pm, a Pre-Surgery nurse will contact you with the time you must arrive at the hospital, and important information regarding eating and drinking before surgery. If you have not received a phone call from a Pre-Surgery Nurse by 7:00 pm, please call the Pre-Surgery Unit (POCU) at 847-723-7400 before 9:00 pm.

• Be prepared to write down the important information given during this call.
• It is important to follow ALL the instructions given by the pre-surgery nurse to prevent delay or cancellation of your surgery.
• If you are going home the day of your procedure, arrange for a responsible adult to drive you home and be with you for 24 hours following your procedure.

MISCELLANEOUS: The decision on where to complete your pre-operative testing will be decided based on your insurance requirements, the surgeon, your primary care physician, and your preference. You may have the option to choose Lutheran General Hospital’s Center for Advanced Care, located on the hospital campus at 1700 Luther Lane. Directions to Advocate Lutheran General Campus.

ADVANCED DIRECTIVES: You will be asked whether you have current advanced directives, which include a living will or a healthcare durable power of attorney. These forms are not mandatory, but advisable for adults to have thoughtfully completed. To download the forms click below:

Living Will - PDF format (En Español)
Durable Power of Attorney - PDF format (En Español)

Be sure to review the Web Page labeled ‘Pre-Operative Instructions’ for additional important information that will assist you in preparing for your surgical procedure.

If you need to contact the Pre-Surgical Testing department, call 847-723-7372, Monday through Friday between 8 am and 4:30 pm. Please leave a message on voice mail with contact information and one of our staff will return your call as soon as possible during normal business hours of 8 am and 4:30 pm Monday thru Friday.
Day Before and Day of Surgery

Advocate Lutheran General Hospital Pre-Operative Instructions

General Guidelines

- If you develop a cold, sore throat, fever or any other illness prior to your procedure date, notify your surgeon immediately.
- If you are going home the same day of your surgery you will need to arrange for a responsible adult, age 18 years old or older, to drive you home and stay with you overnight. If this has not been arranged, it may result in cancellation of your surgery.
- If you have young children, please make arrangements for their care while you are at the hospital.
- Plan to bring your glasses, hearing aids, dentures or other assistive devices with you if you rely on them. Once you go into surgery, these devices will be given to your family.
- On the day prior to your procedure, a representative from the hospital will contact you between 1 pm and 8 pm to confirm your arrival time. Your arrival time will be individualized based on your specific surgical preparation needs. If you do not receive a call by 8 pm, please call the Pre-Surgery Department at 847-723-7400.

Medications and Supplements

- Blood thinners: Medications such as coumadin, heparin, aspirin, plavix, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), and other blood thinners affect the body’s blood clotting capabilities. These medications are usually stopped prior to surgery. Please contact your physician regarding a stop date for these medications.
- Inhalers and eye drops: you may use your inhaler and eye drops the morning of surgery. Please bring these with you on the day of surgery.
- Vitamins and Supplements: due to interactions with anesthesia, the anesthesiologist requests you STOP all herbs, supplements and vitamins seven days prior to your surgery.

Diabetics

- At Advocate Lutheran General Hospital we have a specific diabetic protocol. We will be reviewing the protocol and provide instruction for your diabetic medications with you prior to your procedure.
- Inform your surgeon that you have diabetes.
- Poor blood sugar control can have an impact on a successful surgical outcome, and can lead to a delay or cancellation of your surgery.
Advanced Directives

Advanced Directives such as a *Power of Attorney for Health Care* and *Living Will* are legal documents stating how much medical care a person desires in certain circumstances. These documents allow you to appoint a person to make your medical decisions if you cannot make them for yourself. If you would like to initiate these forms or receive more information a representative from the hospital’s Mission & Spiritual Care will assist you prior to surgery. There is no fee for this service. If you have existing documents please bring a copy with you to the hospital for your medical record.

Preventing Surgical Site Infections (SSI's)

Advocate Lutheran General Hospital is committed to working together with our patients to prevent infection. During your surgery we will provide antibiotics (medications that prevent infections) and clean your skin with special products that help kill germs. We will monitor body temperature, blood sugar and other vital signs.

Your skin helps to protect against infection. Surgeries that cause a break in your skin have a risk postoperative infection. These infections are called surgical site infections (SSI) because they occur on the part of the body where the surgery took place. There is a 1 to 3% chance of developing a surgical site infection when you have surgery.

Our goal at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital is to PREVENT surgical site infections, and you can help.

Your healthcare team performs many tasks to decrease your risk for Surgical Site Infections. These include:

- Scrubbing hands and arms with an antiseptic before your surgery.
- Washing hands with soap and water or no rinse hand wash before and after taking care of you.
- Clip hair with electric clippers to remove the hair in the area of your surgery.
- Wear special hair covers, masks, gowns and gloves during your procedure.
- Give you an antibiotic in the operating room within one hour of making an incision.
- Clean the skin at the site of your surgery with a special soap that kills germs.

Depending on your surgery:

- We may provide you with antibacterial wipes in pre-surgery.
- We may apply a povidone iodine based antiseptic to your nostrils.

How can you help to decrease infection?

1. **Showering**
   - Please follow your surgeon’s specific showering instructions.
2. **Hand washing is the single most important thing you can do to decrease your risk for surgical site infection.**
   - Wash your hands with soap and water. If they are not visibly soiled, you may use hand sanitizer.
   - Have others around you wash their hands or use hand sanitizer.
   - Ask your healthcare providers if they have washed their hands.

3. **No Shaving**
   - Razors may cause small tears in the skin creating an opening for infection.
   - Do not shave near your surgical site with a razor for 3 days before surgery.
   - On the morning of surgery, do not shave any part of your body below the chin. Cleansing wipes are in pre-surgery to decrease skin bacteria and if you have recently shaved, it can cause irritation.

4. **Care of the Surgical Site**
   - Ask family and friends who visit you to not touch the surgical wound or bandages. Instruct them to clean their hands thoroughly before and after visiting you.
   - Ask your doctor to explain why you are continuing to receive antibiotics if you are still receiving them for more than 24 hours after your surgery.
   - Learn about taking care of your wound and know who to contact if you have questions or problems before leaving the hospital.
   - Always clean your hands before and after caring for your wound at home.
   - Call your doctor immediately if you have any signs of infection such as redness or increased pain at the surgical site, drainage, body aches or fever.
   - Remember, if you do not see your visitors or members of your health care team clean their hands, please ask them to do so!

5. **Provide a full health history**
   - Some diseases increase the risk for infection and your doctor will create a plan for prevention.

6. **Quit smoking**
   - Patients who smoke get more infections.

**Day Before Surgery**

- The day before your surgery drink plenty of fluids unless you are on a fluid restriction.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages or smoke for 24 hours prior to your procedure.
- In an attempt to prevent infection, shower the night before and the morning of surgery. If your surgeon has not provided specific bathing instructions, please follow the instructions provided by the Pre-Surgical Testing Department.
- Perform thorough oral hygiene by brushing teeth with a new toothbrush (if possible).
• Remove all jewelry, make up and body piercings prior to arrival at the hospital and leave all valuables at home.

Day of Surgery

• Nothing to eat or drink after midnight the day of surgery unless otherwise instructed by your physician or the nurse from Lutheran General Hospital. This includes hard candy, chewing gum or mints. Pediatric patients will be provided with specific instructions per anesthesia guidelines.
• Brush your teeth, but please swish and spit out the water, do not swallow.
• Do not bring any valuables with you to the hospital, including credit cards.
• Bring all applicable insurance cards and a photo ID with you.
• Do not wear contact lenses. If you wear eyeglasses remember to bring a case to store them in while you are in surgery.
• Wear loose fitting clothes.
• Bring reading materials or music to help pass the time.
• Wi-Fi is available in the hospital. Be sure to give any personal items to family or friends to hold while you are in surgery.
• Pediatric patients may bring a favorite stuffed animal or blanket to help ease their anxiety. A special bottle or sippy cup may also be appropriate for after surgery.
• If you are staying overnight you may bring a bag of items you may need such as toiletry items, slippers, robe and a change of clothes for your discharge. Do not bring large bags. Your family will be given your belongings when you leave the pre-operative area. Lockers will be available in the Surgery Lounge area to store your belongings. These lockers are not large enough to hold a suitcase.

At the Hospital - Pre-surgery

• Parking is free in the parking garage.
• Valet parking is also available for a fee.
• At your scheduled arrival time, go to the Main Entrance of the hospital and check in at registration near the first floor information desk. Please be on time.
• Two visitors over the age of 12 may accompany you after the admission process in the pre-operative department. Children under the age of 12 are not permitted in the surgical areas.

In the pre-surgical area, you will meet your anesthesiologist and speak with your surgeon prior to your procedure. This gives you time to ask questions and address any concerns you may have prior to surgery.

Pain Management

Pain is common after surgery, and it’s our goal to make you as comfortable as possible to aid in your recovery. Pain management is important because it allows you to be comfortable while you heal, get
rest, move more easily and return more quickly to your normal activity. After your procedure, clinical staff will ask you to use a numeric pain scale to rate your pain this will aid in the appropriate pain management. A pain scale appropriate for pediatric patients will be used for children.

Recovery Phase I

- Once surgery has been completed, you will be brought to the recovery room, also known as the post-anesthesia care unit (PACU).
- Clinical staff will monitor you closely as you recover from anesthesia. The length of time spent in recovery is different for all patients and depends on your response to the type of anesthesia received. An average stay in the PACU is 1-2 hours.
- The recovery room nurse will contact your family to provide an update.
- Once discharge criteria has been met, you will return to Pre-Surgery for Phase II recovery care if going home, or you will be transferred to a room if staying overnight. Family will be able to join you in either of these places.
- While you are in Recovery Phase I, your surgeon will meet with your family member privately to provide an update on your surgical procedure.

Recovery Phase II

- If you are going home on the day of surgery, you will be transfer to a phase II recovery after phase I recovery is completed and then allowed to go home once anesthesia discharge criteria are met.
- You will be evaluated in this area to ensure that you can tolerate fluids, have stable vital signs and pain managed. The recovery nurse will review your home care instructions. The average length of stay in Phase II recovery is one hour to one and a half hours.

Patient Satisfaction

- We are committed to providing you with VERY GOOD care. After your discharge, you may receive a patient satisfaction survey. Feedback from you and your family is very important to us. If you wish to discuss any concerns, please call our Patient Relations Office at 847-723-6011.

For more information related to anesthesia you may visit the Park Ridge Anesthesia Associates Web Page at http://www.praa.com

If you have any further questions, contact the Pre-Surgical Testing at 847-723-7372

Thank you for choosing Advocate Lutheran General Hospital and Advocate Children’s Hospital!