

Patient Guide to Surgery



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Your surgery at Hartford Hospital

Hartford Hospital understands your need for information regarding your upcoming surgery. This booklet will guide you through your Hospital experience. **Please bring it with you to the hospital the day of your surgery.** It will explain what to expect at each point of care throughout your hospital stay.

Your surgeon has scheduled you for inpatient surgery at Hartford Hospital. Inpatient surgery means that you will be admitted to the main hospital. Your stay may be a day, overnight or several days depending on the type of surgery you are having. This booklet will give you information regarding your pain management, discharge planning and information about the Team of Caregivers who will be assisting you during your stay. To assist you in preparing for your procedure and to make your stay as comfortable as possible, we ask that you read these instructions carefully.

In Preparation:

A **physical examination** and various tests must be completed within **30 days** prior to your admission date. Be sure to keep this in mind when scheduling any appointments. The hospital requires that we have the results of these tests at least 48 hours prior to your scheduled admission. If you have a history of heart or lung problems, please notify your surgeon.

You will also be asked to complete a Nursing Interview prior to your admission. This may be done in person by speaking to a Registered Nurse in the Pre-Admission Testing Center (PATC). If you do not go to PATC a nurse from the Assessment Center will call you to complete this interview. Please inform us of any special needs such as special foods, special language needs, etc. **We ask you to select one spokesperson as a contact for your family while you are in the hospital.**

If you have a Living Will or Advance Directives, please bring them to the hospital so we may place them in your chart. If you would like more information regarding Living Wills or Advance Directives, please call Patient Relations at 860-545-1400 for assistance.

The Pre-Admission Testing Center Hours are Monday through Friday from 8am- 5pm. Appointments may be scheduled by calling 860-545-2334. Your surgeon's office may also help you with scheduling an appointment.

Your Anesthesiologist requires that all herbal and diet products be discontinued at least 2 weeks before your surgery. Inform your surgeon about any medications you are taking including dietary supplements, herbal medications, prescription medications, insulin and over-the-counter medicines (ex: cough, cold, allergy, heartburn, insomnia, pain) Discontinuing those products will prevent cancellation of your surgery. In addition, if you have a condition called **“sleep apnea”** and require special equipment please bring it with you when you arrive for surgery.

If you take any **blood thinners** such as Aspirin or aspirin products, Coumadin, Warfarin, Plavix, Lovenox, Aggrenox, Fragmin, Arixtra, Ticlid, Pletal or Heparin inform your surgeon about the use of these medications as soon as possible.

If you suffer from chronic pain please notify your surgeon.

Discharge Planning:

You may require skilled healthcare when you are discharged from the hospital. That care may be provided at a rehabilitation facility or at home with nursing services from a home care agency. Your physician and members of the healthcare team can help you determine if you will likely require any of these services. **You are encouraged to be an active participant in your discharge plan.** You may visit rehabilitation facilities and home care agencies prior to your admission if you anticipate requiring these services. Please tell your surgeon prior to your admission any needs you might have. Or you may contact your case coordinator early in your hospital stay to discuss your discharge plan.

Day Before Surgery

Your surgeon may have told you the time of your procedure however the Operating Room schedule is **never** finalized until the day before surgery. **Because schedules may change we ask that you call us between the hours of 1pm and 6 pm to receive any special instructions and to verify the time once again.** We will also inform you of the unit where you must report before surgery. **The phone number for the Surgery Time Line is 860-545-3208.** If your surgery is scheduled on a Monday or after a holiday call on the normal business day before your admission.

Please use this space to list all of the Medications you are currently taking. Please list any nutraceuticals, herbals remedies, over the counter and prescriptions Medications. Please include the amount/dose and the time of day you take your medicines. Please bring this page with you.

For your convenience, please use this area to record the date and time of your surgery and any other information you may receive regarding your hospital visit.

Date of Surgery: _____

Time of Arrival for Admission: _____

Additional notes:



Q. What is the Notice of Privacy Practice?

A. The Notice of Privacy Practice requires hospitals to give you information about your privacy rights and the hospital's practices with regards to use and disclosure of your protected health information (PHI). Hartford Hospital will provide you with its notice of privacy practices. It will explain your rights & protections under law.

Q. What is the “facility directory”?

A. The facility directory is the hospital's mechanism for keeping track of your location while you are in the hospital.

Q. Who uses the facility directory and why?

A. The facility directory is used by staff throughout the hospital when: a caller or visitor to the hospital wants to know your location (unit, room number, telephone number), if a member of the clergy is trying to locate you, or by health care professionals who may be assigned to your care.

Q. Can I choose not to be included in the facility directory?

A. Yes.

Q. What happens if I choose not to be included in the facility directory?

A. Your location (unit, room number, telephone number) even your presence within the hospital would not be given out to anyone that called or inquired about you including any member of the clergy. Also, no mail or flowers would be delivered to you.

Q. How do I choose to restrict release/disclosure of my PHI?

A. Upon admission, you determine what information if any is communicated and to whom it is given. For example, you may decide that no information is communicated to anyone, or perhaps you want to designate one person only to know about your care. You may also dictate how and where the hospital sends you written information including follow-up appointments.

Q. If I have further questions or concerns about my PHI, who can I contact?

A. You should contact a Patient Representative through Patient Relations office at (860) 545-1400.

Evening before Surgery

Do not eat or drink anything after midnight, even water, unless you are instructed otherwise by your doctor or nurse. Be sure to follow any specific preparation instructions given to you by your surgeon. Shower or bathe before coming to the hospital. **If you have been instructed to use the antibacterial soap Hibiclens shower from the neck down the night before and repeat again the morning before you leave for the hospital.**

Day of Surgery

Please bring a list of your prescription medications, over the counter medications, nutritional supplements and herbals. Please be sure to list the dose and time of day you usually take your medication.

Be sure to take your usual prescription medication before you leave home with just enough water to swallow the pills unless advised not to by the nurse. Diabetics should not take any diabetes medication on the day of surgery unless you are told otherwise by your diabetic doctor. Leave any money, jewelry or other valuable items at home. The hospital can not be responsible for such items.

Valet parking is available along the main hospital driveway or you may use the public parking garage that is adjacent to the Medical Office building across the street. **Remember to bring the parking ticket in with you for validation on the admission unit.**

Before and After Surgery

Often patients are able to be admitted to the hospital on the same day their surgery is scheduled. The Registered Nurse will complete a nursing physical assessment, place an Intravenous site, review your chart and allow you time to ask questions. Your family may accompany you up to this point.

Due to privacy and confidentiality constraints, only one person (at least 18 years of age) may accompany you to the waiting area prior to your surgery. Your visitor may not eat or drink in this area. Due to the technical equipment required to care for patients in this area, cell phones must be turned off.

After your operation you will be taken to the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (Recovery Room) to be closely monitored as you awaken from anesthesia. Your surgeon will notify your family member or spokesperson that your surgery is over.

In order to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all patients, visitors are not routinely allowed in the post anesthesia care unit. You will see your family when you arrive on your nursing unit. There is a volunteer in the Bliss 5 lounge who will help to keep your family or spokesperson updated on your condition in the PACU. Your nurse will ask you frequently if you require pain medication and medicate you if needed. You will be receiving intravenous fluids after your surgery. Food and drinks will not be given to you immediately following surgery due to the occurrence of nausea and vomiting post operatively.

Your length of time spent in the post anesthesia care unit will vary depending on your medical condition, the type of surgery you had, the type of anesthesia used and your body's response to it. The average length of time is 2-4 hours, but a longer stay does not indicate a problem and should not be a cause for concern for you or your family. As soon as your condition permits, you will be transferred to the appropriate nursing unit, who will monitor you for the remainder of your stay.

One family member (over 18 years old) may visit you if your condition requires an overnight stay in the PACU. We ask that you select one person who will be the contact person between the PACU and the rest of your family.

Pain Control:

Your surgeon, mid-level practitioner, Registered Nurse and Pharmacist will partner with you to help control any pain or discomfort you may feel after your surgery. Each patient has a unique perception of pain, therefore we encourage you to be proactive and discuss any special needs you may have with your surgeon, Registered Nurse or anesthesiologist. While in the hospital, your caregivers will use a pain scale to help understand your personal pain level. **Please notify us immediately for any changes in your pain control.** Our goal is to partner with you to give you as comfortable a post-operative period as possible.

Respiratory Therapist:

Patient care provider is responsible for the lung management of all patient populations.

Case Coordinator:

Specially trained RN's who will assist you in planning for your discharge from the hospital. They work with you and your family and members of the health care team to determine the most appropriate discharge plan. They review all admissions for appropriateness of hospital stay. They ensure appropriate patient services based on each patient's individual insurance.

Entry Coordinator:

Specially trained RN's who will call you at home prior to your admission and interview you to obtain a health history and share with you information about your hospitalization. They will discuss plans that you need to make for your discharge and answer any of your questions or concerns.

Pharmacist:

Provides pharmaceutical services in collaboration with your doctor and other caregivers. These services include dispensing medications, checking prescriptions for allergies, drug interactions and appropriate dose as well as providing other information and recommendations regarding your drug therapy.

Anesthesiologist:

Your anesthesiologist is a key member of your surgical healthcare team. He or she gives you anesthetics (medications to keep you comfortable) and makes sure you're safe during surgery. He or she also directs your care right after surgery. In some cases, certain tasks may be done or assisted by a nurse anesthetist, a specialty trained nurse.

Professional Students:

Hartford Hospital is a teaching facility in which sponsors many professional student programs. During the course of your stay you may encounter a student in various supervised roles such as nursing, respiratory care, nutrition support etc. These students are partnered with a professional in their field of study at all times while they are here.

PSA (Patient Service Associate/ Housekeeper):

Performs routine housekeeping, supply, equipment care and errands, responding to basic patient safety.

Chaplain/Pastoral Services:

Provide emotional and spiritual support to meet the individualized needs of patients and family.

Registered Dietitian:

Specially trained in the field of nutrition and diet therapy. Each patient care unit is assigned a Registered Dietitian to assist with the nutritional care of those patients. Referrals are received for a variety of reasons including education on Special/Restricted diets, poor food intake, and alternate means of nutrition such as a tube-feeding or parenteral nutrition. Consults are received from healthcare team members, patients, and family members. Patients may request a nutrition consult.

Clinical Social Worker:

Social work addresses varied needs and supports the holistic medical care of patients and families. Each patient care area has a Social Worker assigned to address staff and patient concerns. Requests for Social Work Services come from a variety of resources including patients, families and hospital staff. A physician's order is not required. Patients may address any concerns with the Unit Social Worker or call (860) 545-2966 to request a social worker.

You may benefit from talking with a social worker if you:

- Need someone to listen to your concerns
- Are worried about the future
- Are feeling sad, depressed, or frustrated
- Have concerns about abuse/neglect/exploitation
- Are looking for counseling or guidance

Need information about your (or your loved one's) condition

Physical Therapist:

Provides a physical therapy program that enhances the overall recovery and treatment plan for the patient.

Occupational Therapist:

Provides an occupational therapy program that enhances one's ability to perform self-care abilities and activities of daily living.

Visitation at Hartford Hospital

Your family and friends may visit with you while you are staying at the hospital. Our visiting hours are 12 noon- 8pm, Monday through Sunday. Some nursing units have a flexible visiting schedule. Please inquire at the Nurses Station.



Important Discharge Information:

Your physician and members of the healthcare team will make every effort to keep you informed regarding your discharge date. You may not see your physician on the day of discharge. You may be discharged by one of the resident doctors or a mid-level practitioner who has been working closely with your physician and monitoring your progress. Our goal is for you to be **discharged by 10am**, please help us meet this goal by arranging your transportation in advance. Certain medical conditions, VNA services and skilled nursing facility placement needs may alter your discharge time, please check with your nurse or case coordinator to determine your individualized discharge time.

We care....Tell us what you think.

Each week we randomly select patients to receive a patient satisfaction survey. If you should receive one of these surveys, we encourage you to take the time to complete it. We want to provide excellent services to our patients. In order to do this, we count on your feedback. All comments and recommendations are welcomed and reviewed. Thank you in advance.



Partners in Care

Our health care team is committed to making your stay with us as safe as possible. In order for this to happen we are asking you and your family to partner with us so we can provide you with the best possible care. Please take a moment to read this list of ways you can contribute to your health care plan.

- **Ask your caregivers to confirm their identity and yours before they administer medications or initiate treatments.**
- Ask questions about your daily goals, tests and discharge plans.
- Our goal is to facilitate your discharge by 10a.m. Please help us meet this goal by arranging for transportation in advance.
- Make lists of questions to help you get all the information you need.
- Request assistance getting out of bed or walking if you feel weak or are getting up for the first time after a procedure or surgery.
- Tell caregivers about the medications and /or herbal supplements you are taking and your home routine for taking them. Be sure to include any allergies or reactions to medications or food.
- Ask us to review your current medication orders and explain any changes we have made.
- **Speak up if a situation seems out-of- the- ordinary.**
- **Clarify all discharge instructions with your caregivers.**
- **We ask that you choose one spokesperson as a contact to communicate with the hospital.**
- **Our staff welcomes the opportunity to partner with you and your family during your hospital stay.**



Your Health Care Team consists of the following team of caregivers. They include:

Attending Physician:

Provides the medical management and consultation ensuring quality, safety and appropriateness of care. Provides education and supervision of resident physician staff.

Surgical Team:

(Consists of Resident Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, Advanced Practice Registered Nurses and Medical students)

Provides medical management including performing procedures and writing orders for your plan of care under the supervision of the Attending Physician and in communication with your health care team.

Nursing Management Team:

Provides overall support and resources to the Healthcare Team, the nursing unit staff and to patients with individual needs.

Nurse Educator:

Provides supervised training and educational support to all the nursing staff within patient care units. Works with nursing management team to develop supervised learning plans for all staff and tracks the maintenance of their competency and skills.

RN (Registered Nurse):

Provides nursing care for patients, families and/or significant others throughout your hospitalization and in preparation for your discharge. They will help to make a plan and will organize and direct all aspects of your daily care. They have special training and experience in caring for and your individual needs.

PAA –(Patient Administrative Associate /Unit Secretary):

Provides secretarial support for staff and communicates with all departments to arrange for your laboratory and testing procedures.

PCA (Patient Care Associate/ Nurses Aid):

Performs variety of services to include bathing, toileting, feeding, walking, taking blood samples, performing vital signs (blood pressure pulse, temperature), and electrocardiogram (EKG) under the direct supervision of the RN.