



What to expect during surgery

Enhanced recovery after surgery program

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Surgery date: _____

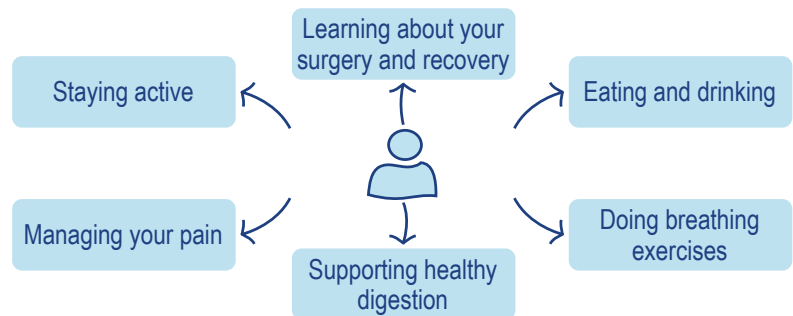
You will soon have surgery at Santé Québec Montérégie-Ouest. This handout will guide you through the steps to prepare before, during and after your surgery.

To help you recover faster after your surgery

The enhanced recovery program we offer after your surgery will help you recover more quickly. This handout explains what you can do to return to your normal activities at your own pace.

What is enhanced recovery?

The image below shows the key elements of the program. You are in the middle because you play an important role in your recovery before, during, and after your surgery.



How does the program work?

An operation can be a source of stress for the body and mind. The enhanced recovery program is designed to help reduce this stress.

Throughout your surgery and recovery, we will provide information about your operation and the steps in the program.

This information is meant to:

- reassure you
- help you take an active role in the program
- make your experience easier

Read the health handouts and other information you have received. Follow the recommendations for the steps before, during, and after your surgery.

How to recover well

A few days or weeks before surgery

Eat well

Before your surgery, your body needs extra energy to prepare. To help, eat meals and snacks that are high in protein

Eating a varied and balanced diet will help your body:

- maintain your strength
- recover more easily

For simple, practical, and adapted advice, see the “High-protein diet” health handout.

Physical activity

Being active every day helps make your body stronger for surgery and can help you recover more quickly afterward.

You don’t need to do intense exercise. The important thing is to stay active every day, such as walking, climbing a few stairs, or stretching.

You should do exercises to improve your:

- mobility: stretching, big movements
- strength: sit down and get up, exercises with weights or resistance bands
- endurance: walking, biking, swimming



Do your exercises at a pace that does not leave you out of breath. You should be able to talk at the same time.

Start with 5 minutes. Add a few minutes every day.

Aim for 20 to 30 minutes of physical activity per day. If that's too much at once, break it into 3, 10-minute sessions per day.

For more tips, see the “helpful resources” section at the end of this handout.



Recommendations for tobacco, alcohol, and drugs

• Alcohol

- Avoid drinking alcohol for 7 days before your surgery.
- If you drink more than 2 drinks per day (women) or 3 drinks per day (men), tell your care team.
- Stopping suddenly can be dangerous for your health. Your care team can help you reduce your consumption safely.
- Treatment may also be offered during your stay to help reduce withdrawal symptoms

• Cannabis (marijuana)

- Do not consume cannabis for **3 days** before your surgery, or as recommended by your anesthesiologist.

• Other drugs

- Avoid stimulants such as cocaine and speed for **7 days** before your surgery.
- If you have used any, inform your care team

• Tobacco

- It is recommended to stop smoking for **4 to 6 weeks** before your surgery to reduce the risk of complications.
- If you want to quit, speak with your surgeon. See the “Stopping smoking” handout for more information



What you need to do before surgery

Follow instructions for your medications

Some medications or natural health products must be stopped before surgery. Talk with your surgeon or the pre-admission clinic nurse so you clearly understand what you need to do.

Preparing is important



- **Plan your return home:**

Before your surgery, plan how you will get home.
Ask someone you trust to be with you when you leave the hospital.

- **Prepare your home:**

Clean and do chores before going to the hospital.
Have some cooked meals ready for your return. This will make things easier for you.

What to do 1 week before surgery

- Stop all natural health products 7 days before surgery.
- Do not shave the area of your body where the surgery will take place.
- Do not use hair removal creams. These can increase the risk of infection and may affect your healing.
- If hair removal is needed, your care team will take care of it.

As of midnight, the day before your surgery

- **Do not eat after midnight.**
- **You can drink clear fluids until 6 a.m. the day of your surgery** (maximum of 500 mL), unless your care team advises otherwise. See the table below and amounts of fluids allowed

Fluids you can drink before surgery

You may drink approved fluids until 6 a.m., on the morning of your surgery (maximum of 500 mL), unless your care team has advised otherwise..

Fluids allowed	Fluids not allowed
<p>For everyone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water <p>If you don't have diabetes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sports drinks• (e.g., Gatorade, Powerade)• Fruit juice without pulp <p>If you have diabetes:</p> <p>Before 6 a.m., check your blood sugar using a finger test.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- If your blood sugar is too low (less than 3.5), drink 1 cup of a clear juice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alcohol• Coffee or tea with milk• Fruit juice with pulp• Dairy products• Energy drinks (e.g., Red Bull, Monster)• Plant-based drinks (e.g., almond or soy milk) 



What to do if you need to reschedule your surgery?

If you can't come to the hospital on the day of your surgery, call the CISSS de la Montérégie-Ouest (Santé Québec Montérégie-Ouest) call the hospital reception as soon as possible:

- **Hôpital Anna-Laberge:**
450-699-2425, ext. 4401
- **Hôpital du Suroît:**
450-371-9920, ext. 2150
(extension 2179 if you need to cancel your surgery on the day of your surgery)

As of midnight, the day before your surgery (continued)

- **Medications:** Take only the medications approved by your doctor, with a drink from the list of allowed fluids. Bring any medications you didn't take in the morning so you can give them to medical team.

Date and time of your surgery

You will receive a call with the date and time of your surgery. Two days before your surgery, you will receive a text message reminding you of this information.

The day before your surgery, you will receive another text message with the time you need to arrive and where to go at the hospital. Write this information in the checklist you were given so you don't forget it.

Your arrival time at the hospital may only be given a few days before, or even the day before your surgery. If you need to stay in the hospital, pack a bag with your personal items ahead of time.

Are you feeling worried about your surgery?

It's normal to feel stressed or anxious before surgery.

Here are some tips to help you relax:

- Take deep breaths
- Relax in a calm, quiet place with soft lighting
- Listen to music that helps you relax
- Watch a TV show or read a book
- Talk about your worries; sharing can help you feel better
- Think about positive things
- Ask to speak with a spiritual care provider
- Do anything else that helps you relax

If your worries are keeping you from sleeping, talk to a member of your care team. They may offer you medication to help you sleep.





Important

Remember to bring any equipment your doctor asked you to bring on the day of your surgery, such as your CPAP machine, brace, or radiology CD (as needed).

Keep these items with you at all times. You may need them during your stay. Refer to your checklist.

Bring only what you need

Your belongings should fit in one small bag or suitcase. Leave valuables, such as jewelry, cash, and credit cards, at home. The hospital is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

The person accompanying you will be responsible for your personal belongings while you are in surgery. If you come alone, staff will tell you where to leave your bag.

If you are having day surgery, make sure someone can stay with you at home for the first 24 hours after your surgery.



The night before or the morning of your surgery:

- Take a bath or shower and wash your hair with a mild, fragrance-free shampoo. This helps prepare your skin and lower your risk of infection.
- Do not put perfume, cream or lotion on your skin.
- If your surgery is on the upper part of your body, do not put deodorant on.
- Do not wear make-up.
- Remove all of your jewelry, including piercings.
- Remove fake nails and take off nail polish from fingers and toes.

☐ At your pre-admission appointment, the nurse will give you a carbohydrate and salt drink mix.

If your surgery is scheduled for 8:00 a.m.:

- At 5:00 a.m., fully mix the packet into 400 mL of water.
- Drink the solution within 20 minutes.

If your surgery is scheduled for another time of the day:

- Bring the packet with you on the day of your surgery.
- The nurse will prepare the drink at the hospital, 2 hours before your surgery.

How long will you stay in the hospital?

The length of your hospital stay depends on your surgery. Ask your doctor or nurse for details about your specific procedure.

Ask someone to come with you to the hospital

After your surgery, you will not be able to drive because of the effects of the medications you receive. Follow your doctor's or pharmacist's instructions to know when it is safe to drive again.

The person who comes with you will stay with you until you go into the operating room. They will receive a text message when you are in the recovery room. They can then meet you on your hospital unit.

The day of your surgery

Most of the time, you will be admitted on the morning of your surgery. Depending on the type of surgery, you may be asked to arrive the day before.

To keep you safe, the care team will ask you your name and date of birth several times.



What to expect when you arrive at the hospital.

This may vary depending on your situation.

1. Answering the nurse's questions

The nurse will ask you questions about your health. If you have a cough, fever, allergies, or any other health problems, it is important to mention them. This is also a good time to share any concerns and ask questions.

2. Changing into a hospital gown

You will be asked to change into a hospital gown, remove your socks and underwear, and stay in your room.

3. Medical tests

You may need to have some medical tests, such as blood work, a urine test, an X-ray, or an electrocardiogram (ECG), which measures your heart activity. All women who have not gone through menopause must take a urine pregnancy test.

4. Shaving the surgical area

If needed, the care team will shave the area of your body where the surgery will take place.

5. Enema (bowel emptying)

If an enema is required, the nurse will explain the procedure to you.

6. Starting an IV (intravenous line)

You may have an IV inserted. If needed, medications can be given through it..

7. Sign the consent form

If it hasn't already been done, you will be asked to sign a consent form. This document gives permission for the surgeon to perform the surgery and for the anesthesiologist to give the most appropriate medication. Before signing, make sure you understand how your surgery will happen and the possible risks or complications. Feel free to ask any questions.

Before you go into the operating room:

- Use the washroom.
- Remove your tampon or menstrual cup. You will be given disposable mesh underwear and a sanitary pad.
- Please also remove:
 - all jewelry, including body piercings
 - dentures
 - hearing aids and any other assistive devices
 - glasses or contact lenses
 - wigs or artificial limbs (prostheses)
 - head scarves or head coverings. The hospital will provide a surgical cap to cover your hair.



Important

If you are having day surgery, the hospital can't store your personal belongings and is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

You can leave your belongings with the person accompanying you or in the location designated by the nursing staff.

In the operating room

A nurse will welcome you and complete a few final safety checks. If you feel cold, let the nurse know. You will be given a warm blanket.

To keep you safe, a few simple, painless monitoring devices will be placed on you:

- A blood pressure cuff will be placed on your arm.
- A sensor will be placed on one of your fingers to measure the oxygen level in your blood.
- Small sensors will be placed on your chest to monitor your heart.

Anesthesia

Before your surgery, you will meet the anesthesiologist. They will explain the different ways to keep you comfortable and pain-free during your surgery. You can ask questions and decide together which option is best for you.

Local anesthesia numbs only the area of your body where the surgery is being done. You will not feel pain in that area, but you may remain awake. If needed, you may be given medication to help you relax.

General anesthesia puts you completely to sleep during your surgery. You will not feel any pain or remember the procedure. The care team will closely monitor your breathing, heart, and safety throughout the surgery.

In the operating room

A team of healthcare professionals will be there to assist the surgeon throughout your surgery.

In the recovery room

After your surgery, you will be taken to the recovery room. You will be closely monitored for 30 minutes to 1 hour, or longer if needed, depending on your condition. You will then be transferred to the day surgery unit or to your care unit if you are staying in the hospital.

Back in your care unit

Your nurse will check on you often to monitor your recovery. For example, they will check your:

- pulse (heart rate)
- blood pressure
- temperature
- breathing
- oxygen level in your blood
- pain
- dressing (bandage)



After your surgery

Bandage

A bandage will be placed over your incision. The nurse will explain how to care for it, following your surgeon's instructions.

IV (intravenous line)

An IV will be started before your surgery to give you fluids and medications through a vein. It will be removed when your surgeon decides it's no longer needed, based on your recovery and overall condition

Urinary catheter

A tube may be placed in your bladder to drain your urine into a bag without having to get up. The catheter may make you feel like you need to urinate often. Your care team will assess when it's time to remove the catheter.

In some cases, you may need to leave the hospital with the catheter. Your nurse will tell you what to do at home. 24 hour /7 days a week support service is available to help you if needed.

Possible side effects after your surgery

For example:

- nausea
- vomiting
- constipation
- pain
- drops in blood pressure

These side effects will not last and can be relieved. Talk to your surgeon or nurse if you have any of these side effects.



Eating and drinking

After your surgery, drinking water and eating will help you regain your strength and heal. Your care team will tell you which foods to eat first. Take it slow.

At mealtimes, you may receive a **high-protein nutritional drink**. It is important to drink it.

Protein helps:

- build and repair muscles
- heal wounds
- help your body fight infections

Tip: Drink it cold. It improves the taste!

Unless your surgeon tells you otherwise, continue eating a high-protein diet

Digestion

Surgery and the medications you receive may slow down your bowels.

Follow the instructions from your care team.

If you're a gynecology or abdominal surgery patient, you may be advised to chew gum for 30 minutes, 3 times a day. Don't forget to bring some with you.

Breathing exercises

It's important to do breathing exercises to prevent infections and lung problems after surgery.

- Take 15 deep breaths every hour while you are awake.
- Do the other prescribed breathing exercises for 5 to 10 minutes every hour

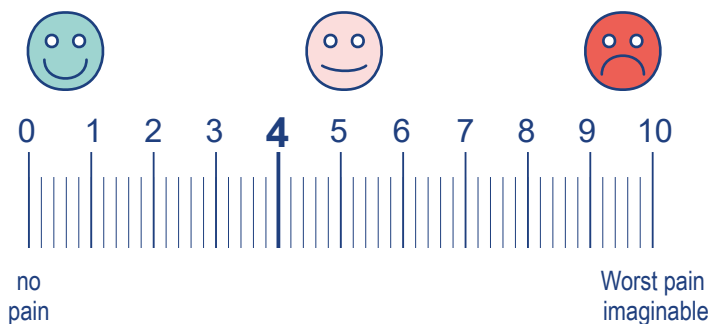


Pain management

It's normal to have pain after surgery. The pain shouldn't go above 4 on a scale of 0 to 10.

If your pain is not well controlled, it can slow your recovery, lengthen your hospital stay, and lead to long-lasting pain.

Talk to your care team. They are there to help you. Depending on your surgery, your team will tell you the best ways to manage your pain



Mobilization

Mobilization means getting you moving after your surgery. As soon as you arrive on the care unit, the nurse will help you move your legs and get up. The sooner you move, the faster you will recover.

The day after your surgery, your care team will encourage you to sit in a chair for at least 2 hours, at least 3 times a day, depending on your condition. Walk in the hallway at least 3 times a day. See the "Staying active after surgery" health handout.

Can you receive visitors after your surgery?

Your loved ones can visit you if you are hospitalized. Ask your nurse or care aide about the visiting hours on your unit. If you are having day surgery, only one person can accompany you.



Useful resources

- **Program The GO to move!**
Physical activity program created and adapted for older adults.

Texte adapté des fiches santé *Le jour de mon opération*, *Bien me préparer avant mon opération* et *Pour récupérer plus vite après une opération* produites par le Centre de littératie en santé du CHUM : chumontreal.qc.ca/centre-litteratie-sante.