

## How to prepare for an upcoming surgery!

### Know your ABC's : Awareness, Be ready, Care recovery

#### Awareness:

Be aware of the many factors you may want to embrace to set yourself up for a better day of surgery and better recovery.

Be aware of your Nutrition and hydration to optimize your health before and after surgery:

#### DID YOU KNOW?

*adults are about 60% water and children are at least 70%.*

#### Be Ready:

Stay well hydrated with healthy fluids including water or non-sugar electrolyte drinks. Tea, coffee, sugary drinks, carbonated drinks, sodas, alcoholic beverages increase your risk of developing mild to moderate dehydration. Mild to moderate dehydration can be reversed in a day.

- Drink water throughout the day and not just when you are thirsty. **DID YOU KNOW:** cucumbers are 95% water! What you eat can add to your water intake during the day. Celery, cucumbers, lettuce .... [Click here](#) for one list. There are many sources for food lists that are good for hydration. One thing you can do is buy fresh strawberries, grapes, watermelon or similar. Wash it, cut it up as needed and freeze it in individual containers. Watermelon is very refreshing to eat frozen similar to a popsicle.
- Electrolytes: Potassium, sodium, chloride and trace amounts of others. Try foods that contain these electrolytes such as spinach, kale, almonds, bananas, avocados, seaweed, rye, tomatoes, lettuce, celery, olives...[click here](#) for one list. Table salt provides plenty of chloride and if you are on a low sodium diet, you can get your needs met by being aware of the foods that provide the electrolytes you need. Be sure to drink a glass of water with the food you choose. Try to avoid the sugar or at least keep it in small amounts. In higher amounts, sugar can disrupt the balance of electrolyte absorption and hydration.
- Immune system in-balance. Stress and lifestyle influence your immune system's response capability. Decrease your stress, exercise your usual amount daily and get your sleep. See some tips below:
  1. Stress Reduction: One of the best ways to reduce your stress is to be “in the know” by planning and preparing for your scheduled surgery.
- Make a list of your questions and leave room for the answers.

- Make a list of what needs to be done so you can mark them off as they are completed. List of preparations prior to the day of surgery; Another list for the day of surgery; Another list of things to be done after your surgery.
- 2. Exercise daily. 10 to 20 minutes daily or what you have been doing. This is not the time to suddenly try to build up muscle or endurance. Keep it steady to keep your immune system in balance and prepare you for your surgery. Inquire as to what you will be allowed to do after your surgery. When to start physical therapy.
- 3. Regular sleep. By staying hydrated, regular exercise, having a list and accomplishing what you need to do; you will find you will sleep better overall. Aim to sleep 8 hours per night but no less than 7 hours.
- 4. Take extra time to be sure you are stable in managing any health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, heart conditions.
- 5. If you drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes or other vaping products, discontinue these products. Refrain from use for 2 weeks or more. Use support apps, enroll a family member or friend or connect with a support group to help you.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

*“Within two weeks of quitting smoking, you may start to notice you're not only breathing easier. You're also walking easier. This is thanks to improved circulation and oxygenation. Your lung function increases as much as 30 percent about two weeks after smoking cessation “, notes the University of Michigan. May 23, 2018*

- 6. Take a pre-operative preparation class if your orthopedic surgery team offers this to you. It is well worth it to attend. Make a list of questions to bring to the class. You may want to meet with a physical therapist prior to surgery, a “Prehab” visit. This can help you learn the proper exercises and use of assistive devices for mobility before you enter the hospital. A physical therapist can also help you understand what to expect with regards to the rehabilitation process, mobility, and activities of daily living once you return home. It may be beneficial to you to learn some of these mobility techniques and precautions before entering the hospital and while not in acute pain.

**Ask “WH” specific questions regarding days leading up to your day of surgery; surgery day; 3 to 7 days after surgery.:**

? What to do and not do before the day of surgery.

- Set up your home for ease of mobility, self cares, simple meals.
- Set up for sleeping supports to elevate your surgical limb if needed or follow post surgery precautions.
- Transportation assistance the day of surgery and for therapy, future physician visits.

- Emergency contact.

? What to bring and not bring with you on the day of surgery.

- Leave medications, jewelry, keys, credit cards, cash at home. You likely pre-paid prior to your day of surgery.
- Bring your insurance card and driver's license / ID, cell phone and charger.
- Bring your reading glasses, hearing aids, dental care needs.
- Let the hospital know of advanced directives / living will. You may bring a copy but not the original.

? What happens right after surgery. ? What do I need to know?

? When to start physical therapy. This is key! Be sure to contact a physical therapy clinic well in advance to check if they take your insurance and to set up not only your first visit but at least 2 follow up visits to be sure there will not be a gap in your treatment. Be sure to let your surgeon know where you plan to get your physical therapy treatment.

### **Care Recovery:**

PT can be essential after surgery to help:

1. Learning how much you can move, preventing blood clots, and minimizing scar tissue.
2. Restore functional range of motion and train functional strength without strain. It may be uncomfortable at the time but well worth it in the long run, don't skip it!
3. Reduce pain and manage post surgery, post activity swelling.
4. Help you understand your surgery, your precautions, how to manage, etc.