



# Pre-Operative Information

## Patient Booklet



Welcome to Grey Nuns Community Hospital

This patient information booklet is designed to guide you through your preparation for surgery

Our goal is to answer your questions and help you prepare for your hospital stay, departure and recovery

We all have a role in your care, be an active partner




# About the Hospital

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## Parking

Parking is available outside the main entrance and meters are in operation 24 hours a day. Weekly and monthly passes are available for purchase from the parking office located in Room 1106 on the main floor. Pay meters accept coins and credit cards. Change machines are available in the main lobby.

You can utilize the  app on your electronic device to search, pay, reserve and extend your parking.

## Our Commitment to Your Safety

Covenant Health is committed to your safety. Expect that we will check for your identification before any treatment, procedure or medication administration. We may ask you to state your name or date of birth many times during your hospital stay.

We have a falls prevention program in place at Grey Nuns. Ask for more information on how you can help us reduce your risk of falling.

You can expect that your health care provider will clean their hands with hand sanitizer or wash their hands prior to giving you care and again after they have finished your care. It is okay to ask your health care provider if they have cleaned their hands if you are unsure.

## Visitor Information

Visiting hours are from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm on most units. Quiet time (patients rest period) is in effect each afternoon from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Visits on the day of surgery are best kept short as you will need your rest. Visitors who are not feeling well are asked to reschedule their visit. More detailed Visitor Information is available on all patient units.



Wireless internet access is available to patients, families and guests on the complementary AHS “healthspot” wireless network.

## Smoking Policy

Covenant Health strives to positively influence the health of Albertans by providing a tobacco free environment and promoting smoking cessation. You will be advised of smoking cessation resources available to you, including nicotine replacement therapy and behavioral counselling.

## The Pre Admission Clinic

During your visit you will be asked to provide information about your general health and a history of your medical problem. You will see a nurse and may see other health professionals such as anesthesiologists, internists, pharmacy technicians and physiotherapists. Tests ordered by your surgeon will be done or reviewed during your visit.

## Enhanced Recovery After Surgery

You will take an active part in getting ready for surgery and in healing after surgery. Grey Nuns Community Hospital has made Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) a part of your surgical journey. ERAS is a way to help you get better faster. It is based on international guidelines that were developed from extensive research.

ERAS uses a team approach and you are an important part of that team. You will be doing some of the work that helps you on your road to recovery. The effort you put into preparing for surgery and in your recovery will reduce the number of days you will spend in hospital following your surgery, as well as keeping you healthy so you don't come back.

**\*\*\*\*\*Please be aware that your surgery may be cancelled due to emergencies and/or other unforeseen circumstances beyond our control\*\*\*\*\***



# Your Surgery Journey: Patient Guide

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**You will be given your surgery date from your surgeon's office:**

Surgery Date: \_\_\_\_\_

You will receive a phone call from the Pre Admission Clinic (PAC) to confirm your surgery time between 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm the day before your surgery.

If you have not heard from PAC by 2:00 pm please call 780.735.7406 between 2:00-4:00 pm for your time. From 4:00-7:00 pm call 735-7400

If your surgery is on Monday, you will receive a call the Friday before.

Arrival Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Surgery Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**When you arrive at the hospital, go directly to the Extended Day Unit (Unit 23). Take the elevators to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the main hospital and follow the signs.**

**DO NOT** stop at Admitting, you have already been pre-registered.

**If you experience any of the following, let your surgeon's office know ASAP:**

- The flu, cold or other illness
- Open sore or skin infections
- Unforeseen circumstance

You have been booked for elective surgery. Sometimes there are unforeseen circumstances that may present a need for your surgery to be cancelled and then rescheduled. This could include hospital emergencies or your own illness.



# Before and During My Surgery

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## My Role Before Surgery

- Plan ahead (make sure everything is ready for you when you go home)
- Quit smoking as far ahead as possible
- Stay active – walking is a great way
- Cut down or stop drinking alcohol as far ahead as possible
- Follow the guidelines for drinking and eating the night before surgery (if you don't, your surgery could be cancelled)

## What to bring:

- Toiletries
- Slippers
- Chewing gum
- Phone charger
- Your own **empty** water bottle
- Self-entertainment (I Pad, Book, Crossword)
- My Goals of Care (green sleeve)
- A bag for your belongings
- Any guardianship or legal documents

## Do **NOT** bring:

- Money and credit cards
- Electrical items  
(for example: hair dryers)
- Scented products
- Jewelry

**\*\*\*We are not responsible for lost/stolen or damaged items\*\*\***



## The Night Before My Surgery

- See handout for Eating and Drinking instructions
  - You may brush your teeth and/or rinse your mouth
  - Bathe or shower and wash your hair the night before or morning of surgery
  - Other preparations:
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## The Day of Surgery

**Take all of your regular morning medications (*including chronic pain medications if prescribed*) with a sip of water EXCEPT:**


- **DO NOT** wear makeup, nail polish, scents, jewelry or tampons
- Wear comfortable and loose fitting clothing
- You may brush your teeth and/or rinse your mouth
- Be prepared to walk to the Operating Room (if able) without: glasses, contact lenses, body piercings, jewelry, watch, dentures, prostheses or a tampon
- **Except in special circumstances family members are not permitted into the operating room and/or holding area.**



## During My Surgery

### **The Operating Room**

- You will meet your physician team prior to surgery. An operating room nurse will double check your surgical information and take you into the operating room. Monitoring equipment for your heart and breathing will be used by the anesthesiologist during your surgery.

### **Anesthetics**

- You will receive either a General Anesthetic or a Spinal/Nerve block by an Anesthesiologist. General anesthesia will keep you relaxed and asleep. Spinal/epidural or Nerve block anesthesia is a medication given by needle to numb the part of your body where you are having surgery. You will be awake but may also receive a medication to help you relax.

### **The Recovery Room**

- You will wake up in the recovery room. You will receive oxygen and may have compression stockings (special air filled stockings) on your legs to help prevent blood clots.
- Nurses will monitor you and when you are ready, you will be taken to your nursing unit.



# After My Surgery

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## What to Expect with My Surgery

### 4 Things to Remember After My Surgery

#### 1. After my surgery, can I drink?

- Most patients are able to drink after surgery, ask your nurse.
- Do not force yourself to drink fluids. If you feel sick, let your nurse know.

#### 2. How long do I need my IV?

- Your IV can usually be stopped after you are drinking well.
- Ask your nurse if you've had enough fluids to stop your IV.

#### 3. When can I get up?

- Most patients can walk after surgery with help from your nurse.
- Try to take a **very short walk** or **sit in a chair** the day of surgery.

#### 4. Can I eat today?

- Most patients are able to eat after surgery. Start with small amounts of food.
- Choose what you want to eat from your meal tray and don't feel you have to eat it all.
- If you start to feel sick, let your nurse know.
- Chewing gum helps to settle your stomach and decrease gas pain.





## Managing My Pain and Nausea

Make sure your pain and nausea are controlled so you can feel better sooner and recover faster.

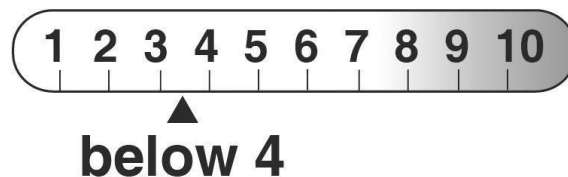
Good pain and nausea control helps your recovery so you can move around, eat and drink, feel relaxed, and sleep well. Let your nurse know if your pain or nausea makes it hard to move or eat.

Some commonly used pain medicines (opioids) have side effects such as drowsiness, nausea, and constipation (trouble having a bowel movement). These side effects can make you feel worse and lead to longer hospital stays.

The ERAS Care Pathway uses a combination of medicines to control your pain. Expect to have some pain after surgery, even when you take pain medicine.

Your healthcare team will work with you to keep your pain and nausea under control by offering you regular pain and nausea medicine.

Your nurse will ask you to rate your pain and nausea from 0 (no pain) to 10 (the worst pain you can imagine). Tell your nurse if your pain reaches 4/10 or your nausea reaches 2/10. The medicine or epidural will be adjusted as needed to assist in your comfort.





## Mobilizing and Exercising After My Surgery

Be active- get out of bed as soon and as often as possible (Unless otherwise directed by your healthcare team, e.g. Vascular surgery)

It may be hard to move around right after surgery but moving will help you heal faster.

Moving soon after surgery can lower the chance of complications such as blood clots or an infection in your lungs (pneumonia)

It helps you to regain your muscle strength and helps your breathing and digestion and can decrease post-operative gas pain.

Take short walks at least 3 times each day, increase your activity as tolerated.

Sit in a chair to eat meals.

Your nurse will teach you how to get out of bed properly, to not injure your surgical site.

Your nurse will teach you about two types of exercises to help you after your surgery:

- Deep Breathing and Coughing Exercises
- This will help keep your lungs expanded and clear after surgery
- Foot and Ankle Exercises
- This will help your muscles to stay strong and reduce swelling. It also lowers your chance of a blood clot.

## Deep Breathing, Coughing, and Moving After Surgery

It's important to practice deep breathing and coughing so that you'll be able to do the exercises below easily after surgery. These exercises will help your breathing, clear your lungs, and lower your risk of pneumonia.

Breathe deeply and cough every hour while you're awake for the first 2 to 3 days after minor surgery, and until the pain in your incision is gone after you've had major surgery. These exercises work better if you do them sitting up.

It's also important to move and change your position often. These position changes help to make your breathing and coughing exercises work better.



## Deep Breathing Exercises

Do these exercises every hour when you're awake.



1. Breathe in deeply and slowly through your nose, expanding your lower rib cage, and letting your abdomen move forward.
2. Hold for a count of 3 to 5.
3. Breathe out slowly and completely through pursed lips. Don't force your breath out.
4. Rest and repeat 10 times every hour. Rest longer if you become dizzy or lightheaded.

## Coughing Exercises

It's best to do coughing exercises when you're feeling comfortable. Your healthcare provider will tell you if you shouldn't do the coughing exercises in this handout.



1. If you're lying on your back, bend your knees (if your surgeon says you can), and rest your feet on the bed.
2. Depending on the surgery you had, support your incision firmly with your hands or a small pillow before you try to cough.
3. Breathe in deeply and cough firmly. If you cough up some mucous, clear it into a tissue. Repeat the coughing until there isn't any more mucous. If you have a lot of mucous, you may need to take a break so you don't get too tired.



## Foot and Leg Exercises

Foot and leg exercises, also help you to get better sooner and prevent problems like blood clots. You may also have SCD stockings (Sequential Compression Devices) on your legs (the stockings inflate and deflate to keep good blood flow in your legs).

Do these exercises every hour while you're awake.

### A. Ankle Pump

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1. Pump your ankles up and down for 1 minute.
2. Relax both feet.
3. Repeat 5 times then relax.



### B. Ankle Circles

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1. Circle both ankles; first to the right, and then to the left.
2. Repeat 5 times then relax.



### If your surgeon says you can:

1. Bend each knee one at a time, sliding your foot up along the bed and then back down.
2. Repeat 5 times then relax.

## Changing Positions

Change your position every hour while awake, or as directed by your nurse. It's important to move often to prevent problems like a lung infection, blood clots, and weak muscles.



## Walking

- For your safety, it's important to have a nurse or physical therapist with you the first time you get up, and remember to wear proper footwear.
- At first you may need some help. As you become stronger, you'll be able to move around more on your own. You may need to take short rests in between walks.
- It's normal to feel dizzy and uncomfortable when you first get up. Remember to move slowly. If you have more pain or dizziness, please tell your nurse or physical therapist.
- The goal is to be able to walk in the hall several times a day.

**If you have any questions about these exercises, please ask your physical therapist or nurse**

## Incision Care After Surgery

After surgery, you will need to take care of the incision as it heals. Doing so may limit scarring, may help you avoid pain or discomfort, and may help lower the risk of problems like infection.

Your doctor used either stitches, staples, tissue glue, or tape strips to close the incision. And you will need to keep the area clean, change the dressing according to your doctor's/nurses instructions, and watch for signs of infection.

### **To reduce the risk of infection:**

- Ask your doctor how long you need to keep the area dry. Follow your doctor's instructions exactly.
- Look at the incision every day, checking for signs of infection (see below).
- Change the dressing as your doctor/nurse recommends.

### **Do not:**

- Scrub or rub incisions.
- Remove the tape strips (such as Steri-Strips) from incisions unless your doctor or nurse tells you to.
- Use lotion or powder on incisions.
- Expose incisions to sunlight.
- Take a bath unless you can keep the incision dry. Instead, take showers or sponge baths until your doctor says it's okay to take baths. Before you shower, cover the dressing with a plastic bag or use another method of keeping it dry.



You may notice some soreness, tenderness, tingling, numbness, and itching around the incision. There may also be mild oozing and bruising, and a small lump may form. This is normal and no cause for concern.

## Signs of infection

**Call your doctor** if you notice signs of an infection, such as:

- A yellow or green discharge that is increasing.
- A change in the odour of the discharge.
- A change in the size of the incision.
- Redness or hardening of the surrounding area.
- The incision is hot to the touch.
- Fever.
- Increasing or unusual pain.
- Excessive bleeding that has soaked through the dressing.



# Planning to go home

## Checklist for going home

Before you are discharged from the hospital, your nurse will go through discharge teaching and instructions with you. The teaching that will be reviewed is on:

### **My Discharge Teaching Checklist**

- Signs of Infection
- Wound Care/Dressing Change/Cast Care
- Hygiene
- Diet and Hydration
- Bowel and Bladder
- Activity
- Pain Management
- Prescription(s)
- Follow -Up Appointments

## **Driving Instructions**

You should not drive for 24 hours after receiving anesthetic, please make alternate arrangements.

The length of time that you should not be driving after your surgery will be decided by your surgeon.



# My Questions

Questions that I have after reading this booklet:

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## **How to find answers to my questions:**

Pre Admission Clinic.....780.735.7406

Unit 23 Extended Day Unit.....780.735.7400

Covenanthealth.ca/hospitals-care-centres/grey-nuns-community-hospital

ERAS information: go to [www.albertahealthservices.ca/eras](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/eras)

For additional resources go to [www.myhealth.alberta.ca](http://www.myhealth.alberta.ca) under “Health information and tools” to find information on the following topics:

- **Health A-Z;** General Health Information
- **Healthy Living:** Resources for living a healthy lifestyle
- **Tests and Treatments:** Easy to understand information about tests and treatments
- **Medications:** Easy to understand medication information
- **Find Healthcare:** Locating hospitals and programs in Alberta
- **Health Alerts:** Health alerts provincially and around the world
- **Patient Care Handouts:** Handouts and information on over 2600 topics related to care, anatomy and surgeries



Call Health Link by dialing 811 for quick and easy advice from a registered nurse 24/7. They will ask questions determine symptoms and determine the best care for you. Remember, **in a medical emergency, always call 911** or visit the nearest emergency department.

This booklet was written by the staff of the Surgery Program, Grey Nuns Community Hospital.  
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# *Compassionate Care led by Catholic values*

Mission rooted in  
150 years  
of tradition

