

Getting Ready for Your Test or Procedure



You are scheduled to have a test or procedure. This sheet will help you get ready. Make sure to follow all instructions from your healthcare team. The team wants to help you be ready so your test or procedure goes well.

Understanding the test or procedure

Have a talk with your healthcare provider. Make sure you understand why you're having it, what it involves, and any risks or benefits. If you have any questions or concerns, make sure to ask. Consider writing down your questions so you won't forget them. If English is not your main language, ask for an interpreter.

You may be asked to sign a consent form explaining the procedure. Signing it means you understand the risks and benefits, have had all your questions answered, and agree to have it done. If you have trouble reading, ask that the information be read to you. Or bring a friend to help you.

If you feel nervous

Being nervous before a medical procedure is normal. If you feel worried, talk with your healthcare team. They can help reassure you. Try methods such as deep breathing exercises, listening to calming music, or picturing a peaceful scene. These can help you relax. You can also ask if your healthcare provider will use medicine during the procedure to help you relax.

Doing a bit of homework

- **Fill out all the forms.** Don't leave parts blank. Tell the healthcare staff if you have any trouble accessing, printing, or reading the forms.
- **Write down a list of all your medicines.** Include the names, doses, and how often you take them. Include vitamins and other supplements. You will bring this with you on the day of your procedure. The staff will ask you the last time you took a dose for each medicine.
- **Pick up bowel prep supplies.** If you need to do bowel prep, pick up the supplies you need from the drugstore as instructed by your healthcare provider. Make sure you understand the instructions. Call the provider's office if you have questions.
- **Arrange for a ride home.** Ask an adult family member or friend to drive you home after the procedure if you are told you cannot drive yourself home. You may need to give the healthcare staff this person's name and phone number. The staff can call them when it's time to pick you up.
- **Schedule time off work.** Ask the healthcare staff how long you need to recover.

What to tell the healthcare team

Make sure your healthcare team knows these things:

- **What medicines you take.** This includes all prescription and over-the-counter medicines. It includes all vitamins, herbs, and supplements. Ask if you should stop any before the procedure.
- **If you have allergies.** This includes allergies to medicines, latex, or foods.
- **If you have a dental bridge, dentures, implants, or loose teeth.** This information is important in the event that tools need to be used in or passed through your mouth.
- **If you had a reaction to sedation or contrast dye.** These chemicals may be used for your procedure. Sedation helps you relax. Contrast dye helps body tissue show up on images. Tell the team if you ever

had a reaction to either of these. Tell them what the reaction was, such as a rash or trouble breathing.

- **If you have sleep apnea.** This may affect how sedation is given to you.
- **If you have metal on or in your body.** This includes implants and piercings.
- **If you smoke.** Smoking can raise the risk for complications. Talk with your healthcare provider. They can help you stop before the procedure as needed. Go to smokefree.gov for tools, support, and other help.
- **If you use illegal drugs or drink alcohol frequently or in larger amounts.** They want to make sure medicines used in the procedure will be safe for you.
- **If you wear contact lenses.** You may need to leave them out and wear glasses.

Do your medicines cause bleeding?

Some medicines affect how much a person bleeds. This can be a problem with some procedures. This includes anticoagulants such as warfarin, apixaban, and clopidogrel. It also includes things you can buy over the counter. Ibuprofen, naproxen, and aspirin thin your blood. So do things like ginkgo, turmeric, dong quai, and evening primrose oil. Make sure your healthcare team knows everything you take. They may tell you to stop taking some of them for a short time before your procedure.

Right before your procedure

- Call the healthcare provider's office if you get a cold, fever, sore throat, diarrhea, or other health problem. Your provider will let you know if they need to reschedule.
- Follow all instructions for not eating or drinking before the procedure. This includes water. Your procedure may need to be rescheduled if you do not follow your provider's directions. This is for safety.
- Do not shave, wax, or trim hair on the procedure site, unless you are told to. If hair needs to be removed, it is most often done by a member of the team at the healthcare center.
- Remove nail polish and artificial nails if advised.

On the day of your procedure

- Don't wear makeup. Don't use perfume, deodorant, lotion, or hairspray.
- Leave all jewelry (including rings), watches, and other valuables at home.
- Wear or bring your glasses if you were told not to wear contact lenses.
- Dress in comfortable clothes and shoes.
- Arrive on time at the hospital or healthcare center.

Bring these with you:

- Health insurance cards
- Forms you had to fill out
- A photo ID
- The list of your medicines

Talk with your healthcare team

If you're unsure of anything before your procedure, call your healthcare team. They want your procedure to go well and will be ready to answer questions and concerns.

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