

Anxious About Surgery? Try These Tips



It's not every day that you have surgery. So it's normal to feel anxious beforehand. After all, there's a lot to think about, such as how to prepare for the surgery, what happens during and after, and how you'll feel once it's done. Here are some ways to help lessen your anxiety about your upcoming surgery.

Be open with your healthcare provider

Keep in mind, your healthcare provider has advised surgery because they think it's the best choice for you. So talk with your healthcare provider about any concerns or questions you have, even if they're last minute. They understand how you feel and want to make sure you're as relaxed as possible.



Try these other tips

- Learn more about your procedure. Knowing what to expect and being prepared beforehand may help ease your fears. Write down any questions or concerns. That way, you'll remember them when you talk with your healthcare provider.
- Connect with others who have already had the surgery. They can give you real-world feedback. You may be able to find a support group near you or online.
- Ask a loved one or a trusted friend to come with you to the hospital or surgery center. They can be there to give you social support when you need it most.
- Focus on the positive. Think about how surgery may help you feel better. For example, after your recovery, you may have less pain or be able to return to activities you once enjoyed.
- Speak up if you have severe anxiety. Your healthcare provider may give you medicine to ease your anxiety.
- Distract yourself. Keeping your mind off the surgery can help. While waiting for the procedure, read a book, listen to music, or play games.
- Practice some relaxation techniques. These include deep breathing, meditating, or thinking about pleasant places or images. You may also want to try progressive muscle relaxation. It entails tensing and then relaxing different muscles, like those in your jaw or your hands. Start at your head and work down to your toes. Hold each muscle group for 5 seconds and then relax it for 10.

- Don't smoke. Some people smoke to reduce anxiety. But smoking can cause complications with the surgery.

On the day of your surgery, your care team will ask you often how you're feeling. Be honest, so they can do all they can to help keep you comfortable.

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