

PATIENT INFORMATION FOR SURGICAL SAFETY

Your active participation in health care is important for your safety. This information will help your discussion with your care-provider. Be a well-informed partner in your own care.

Available for free download from the Essential and Emergency Surgical Care Programme <http://www.who.int/surgery/en> and Patients for Patient Safety Programme http://www.who.int/patientsafety/patients_for_patient/en

WHAT
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BEFORE
AND AFTER
SURGERY

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If you or your child is undergoing a surgical procedure, be sure to communicate the following to your health-care provider

BEFORE SURGERY

1. Tell them about your previous surgeries, anesthesia and current medications, including herbal remedies
2. Tell them if you are pregnant or breast-feeding
3. Tell them about your health conditions (allergies, diabetes, breathing problems, high blood pressure, anxiety, etc.)
4. Ask about the expected length of your hospital stay
5. Ask for personal hygiene instructions
6. Ask them how your pain will be treated
7. Ask about fluid or food restrictions
8. Ask what you should avoid doing before surgery
9. Make sure that the correct site of your surgery is clearly marked on your body

AFTER SURGERY

1. Tell them about any bleeding, difficulty breathing, pain, fever, dizziness, vomiting or unexpected reactions
2. Ask them how you can minimize infections
3. Ask them when you can eat food and drink fluids
4. Ask when you can resume normal activity (e.g. walking, bathing, lifting heavy objects, driving, sexual activity, etc.)
5. Ask what, if anything, you should avoid doing after surgery
6. Ask about the removal of stitches and plasters
7. Ask about any potential side effects of prescribed medications
8. Ask when you should come back for a check-up