



Getting Ready for Surgery at Bramhall Campus


Maine Medical Center
MaineHealth

These pages show all the steps to get ready for surgery.
Read more about each step on the page shown.

✓ **Paperwork to Get Ready for Surgery**3

- Expect to **get** many written materials
- Expect to **give** information many times

Use your **Information for Your Surgery** folder to keep papers, booklets and handouts together.

✓ **Before Your Hospital Stay**4

- Pre-register
- Expect a PREP phone call or visit
- Schedule and complete exams and tests required before surgery

✓ **Setting Up Help and Caregivers**6

- Choose people to drive you to and from the hospital and help at home

✓ **Getting Your Home Ready**8

Plan ahead for:

- Healthy food and meals
- Medical equipment you may need
- Safety at home after surgery

✓ **Getting Healthy Before Surgery**9

What you need to do:

- Get healthy before your surgery
- Prepare for your hospital stay
- The night before and day of surgery

✓ **Prepare for Your Hospital Stay**10

- Confirm location and time
- Have a driver ready to pick you up
- Pack for the hospital

✓ **The Night Before and Day of Surgery**12

- Eating and drinking
- Showering
- Checking into the hospital

✓ **What to Expect After Surgery**14

- The first few hours after surgery — recovery in the PACU
- Managing pain and possible side effects from pain medicine
- Preventing infections
- Planning for care after you leave

✓ **Going Home or to Rehab**18

- Alert your driver
- Understand discharge instructions
- Move, rest, sleep and heal
- Attend follow-up medical visits

✓ **Notes** 20-22

 When you see this it means there is a spot to write this in your **PREP Planner**.

You can get help filling out your **PREP Planner**. If you don't have needed information or struggle with writing, ask for help. Your doctor's office, a friend, or a family member might be good helpers.

Paperwork to Get Ready for Surgery

✓ Expect to get many written materials, including:

- This booklet — Guides you on the steps to get ready for surgery.
- A hospital booklet titled “Information for Your Stay” — Shares information about Maine Medical Center services, policies and billing processes.
 - » You can find this online at mmc.org/admissions
- Possible handouts from your surgeon or care team — Gives information and directions for before and after surgery.
 - » For more patient education visit: mainemedicalpartners.org/neuroedu
- Your PREP Planner to Surgery — Provides a review of steps before surgery and a place to write important information.

To help you stay on track: Keep materials together in the Information for Your Surgery folder given to you.

✓ Expect to give information many times

Care teams at doctor offices and the hospital will need certain medical information about you including:

Write these in your PREP Planner

- **Your health conditions and doctors that care for you.**
For example, if you have high blood pressure, it's important for all care teams to know this and the name of the doctor who helps with it. Likewise, if you have other conditions include them all on this list.
- **Your past surgeries or tests.** If you have had surgery or tests (like a stress test), your care team wants to know what it was for, when it took place, and if you had any special problems during or after.
- **Your allergies.** List all allergies, including those for medicines, latex (as in medical gloves), foods and seasonal flowers and trees. List the items and your reactions.
- **Medicines you take,** include prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs ... etc. Copy the names of these items right from the bottles. Include the dose of each item and how often you take it. Be sure to tell your surgeon and PREP nurse if you are on **blood thinners**.

Before Your Hospital Stay

You must complete the steps below before you come in for your surgery. If you're not sure what to do, ask for help from your surgeon's office or call us using the phone numbers listed.

✓ Call us or go online to Pre-register

We need information about you to prepare for your hospital stay. Call 207-662-2433 or (toll free) 800-619-9715 Monday through Friday, between 7:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. The call will last about 10 minutes.

- We will ask for your insurance information. Please have it ready.
- We keep the information you give us private.

✓ Expect a PREP phone call and a possible visit

PREP is a program to prepare you for surgery. A PREP nurse will call you on a weekday between 8:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. You can also call them at a time that is convenient for you. You can also call them at a time that is convenient for you.

Important: The PREP call comes from a toll-free (800) number which may not be familiar. If you miss the call, you can call back at 800-838-8217.

Have your PREP Planner with you during your PREP call or visit so that you can take notes.

The PREP call will last between 15 and 45 minutes. The nurse will review:

- Your health history
- What you can eat or drink before surgery
- Medicines you take and how to take them before surgery
- **Please** be sure to tell the nurse if you are on blood thinners
- Where to go the day of your surgery



Some patients are asked to also attend a PREP visit. If a visit is needed, the nurse will schedule it with you during the PREP phone call.

- **Location:** PREP visits are held at 335 Brighton Ave, Portland, and last 1 to 2 hours
- **Paperwork:** Bring your folder with all your paperwork
- **Medical Checks:** You may have blood tests or Xrays at the visit

Questions about PREP? Call: 207-662-8217, Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. For more information about PREP, visit mmc.org/prep

✓ Complete specialist visits, blood work, or X-rays required by your surgeon

Usually these can be done during your PREP visit, if you have one. If not, your surgeon's office will help schedule appointments for you.

✓ Sign up for MyChart.

MyChart is your health record that you can access through the internet. You can view information about your medical visits, communicate with your doctor, see your test results and more. To sign up, request self-access online at mychart.mainehealth.org

Setting up Caregivers and Help

You will need someone to help you on the day of your surgery and as you recover. It's wise to arrange this help now, before surgery. A family member, good friend or neighbor may be able to fill this role, or perhaps several different people can be helpers.

Write down who will help you in your PREP Planner

- **Drive you to the hospital and drive you home.** Do not plan on taking a taxi. If something happens on the way home a taxi driver is not prepared to help.

If you don't have someone to drive you, tell your surgeon.

- **Stay at the hospital** during your surgery and get information from your medical team to share with loved ones. If you stay overnight in the hospital, helpers are NOT allowed to stay with you. For a list of lodging options, visit mmc.org/local-lodging

Important: Helpers should not bring children or others who may need supervision with them to the hospital. Children are not allowed in pre-op or recovery areas. If children are with you, your helper will need to look after them and will not be able to be with you before or after surgery.

- **Stay with you for 24 hours after you leave the hospital** to help watch for side effects from medicines.
- **Care for children, pets, or others.** If you have young children, pets, or are the major caregiver for someone else, you may need help with these tasks after surgery.
- **Help around the house.** You may need help with cooking, cleaning or yard work while you are in the hospital and while you heal.

Important: Having a helper after surgery increases your safety. If you do not have someone to help, tell your surgeon before your surgery date.

Getting Your Home Ready

Getting your home ready for the days **after** surgery will help your peace of mind, promote healing, and keep you safe. Even if you may go to Rehab first, it's wise to plan ahead.

✓ Stock your house with healthy food and meals

Before surgery, follow the instructions about eating and drinking given to you. **After surgery**, unless you require a special diet, eating healthy meals and snacks and drinking extra water help speed recovery.

✓ There are things you can do to help prevent constipation:

- Eat a diet high in fiber or take a daily fiber supplement like Metamucil
- Try to drink at least 8 glasses of water each day
- Try natural laxatives like prune juice if possible

If you need to follow a special diet, your surgeon will let you know.

✓ Arrange for medical equipment you may need

Ask your doctor whether you might need special equipment at home to help you manage your recovery.

✓ Prepare your living space for a safe recovery

Pain medicines wear off slowly and can dim your thinking. Surgery may lessen your ability to move around. Plan ahead and get your home ready.

- Prevent a fall. Create a “clear path” through your living space to your bed, bathroom and kitchen. Remove scatter rugs and get cords out of the way.
- Put items needed often, such as tissues or glasses, in easy reach.
- Make sure items that you need are on the first floor, if you cannot walk upstairs.
- Plan how to manage if you cannot bend, lift, twist, or walk on both feet.



Getting Healthy Before Surgery

Surgery and recovery go best when you partner with your medical team and take good care of yourself **before** surgery. Use the tips below.

Write this in your PREP Planner

✓ If you use tobacco, do your best to stop well before surgery.

Some surgeries **require** quitting. Your surgeon will let you know.

Quitting smoking can:

- Make it safer for you to have surgery
- Make your recovery from injury and surgery faster and easier
- Lower your risk of spinal disc breakdown and improve your bone health
- Lower your risk of having complications, serious illnesses and death

I'm ready to quit. Now what? Make a plan, set a date and get ready.

- If you need help making a plan, call the Maine Tobacco Helpline at 800-207-1230
- Talk about medicine options with your primary care doctor

✓ Manage other medical conditions well

This will help you heal faster and with fewer complications. If you take prescribed medicines, take them just the way your doctor or PREP nurse told you. If you have:

- **Sleep apnea**, be sure to tell your surgeon and PREP nurse
- **Diabetes**, talk to your doctor about getting your A1c under 8
- **High blood pressure**, talk to your doctor about getting it under 130/80
- **Heart conditions**, talk with your heart doctor to make sure this surgery is safe for you

Prepare for Your Hospital Stay

✓ Confirm your surgery date and time, where to park, and where to check-in.

Write this in your PREP Planner

- **Surgery Date and Time:** If you are not sure about when your surgery is, call your surgeon's office at 207-885-0011 to confirm. Stress on the day of surgery makes it easy to get confused.
- **Surgery Location:** You will have surgery at Maine Medical Center, 22 Bramhall Street, Portland.
- **Parking:** We offer valet parking at the Main Entrance. The valet office will not always be open when you leave the hospital so make sure you ask them about what time they close.
- **Check in:** Go in the Main Entrance to the Admitting desk. Someone will walk you up to the 2nd floor of the Bean building (Bean 2) where you will have your surgery.

Important: Construction at the hospital may change directions and parking from time to time. Check on them close to your actual surgery date at mmc.org/modernization

✓ **Make sure you have a driver ready to pick you up and take you home.**

You will not be allowed to drive yourself or take a taxi.

✓ **Pack for the hospital**

Bring these items to the hospital with you:

- Picture ID and health insurance card
- Your Surgery PREP Planner

If you did not fill out your Surgery PREP Planner, bring:

- A list of your medicines and when you took them last
- The name and phone number of person you wish the surgeon to speak with after surgery
- If you plan to use the hospital pharmacy to fill your medicines, you may need cash or a credit card to pay for any copays. Ask your helper to keep these while you're in surgery.

Other items you might need

- If you are staying in the hospital overnight, you may wish to bring a **small** bag with a few personal items such as your cell phone and charger, slippers and robe, toothbrush and toothpaste, hair brush and razor. Your helper will need to hold this while you are in surgery. We can also give these to you at the hospital.
- The clothes you wear to the hospital will be fine to wear home when you leave.
- If you wear contacts, bring them in a contact lens case. Wear your glasses on the day of surgery.

- If you use a hearing aid or dentures, wear them on the day of surgery and bring the case. If we need to remove them, we will keep them safe for you.
- If you use a CPAP machine, bring it with you.
- If you will need special equipment such as crutches or a walker after surgery, ask your surgeon about whether to bring these to the hospital. If yes, be sure to label them with your name.

✗ **Do NOT bring:**

- Valuables like jewelry
- Medicines you take at home, including marijuana.
- Weapons.
- Pets.
- Electric razors, heating pads, fans, radios or TVs.

The Night Before and the Day of Surgery



Check these off in your PREP Planner

✓ **Follow the directions you were given for eating, drinking and taking medicines the night before and day of surgery.**

These directions are for your safety. Surgery may be cancelled if directions are not followed.

- Do not drink alcohol, use drugs or smoke for 24 hours before surgery
- You may brush your teeth and spit out the water
- You may take your medicines, as directed by PREP, with small sips of water

- ✓ Bathe or shower the night before and again the morning of surgery. Use anti-germ soap, like Dial, as asked.

Follow these directions for showering:

1. Wet your body and hair with water

- Wash your hair as usual with your normal shampoo and rinse

2. Wash your body using plenty of soap and warm water

- Apply plenty of soap to a wet, clean wash cloth and wash your entire body
- Wash gently paying special attention to the area where your surgery will be done (get help from a partner if needed)
- Do not scrub the skin too hard

3. Rinse thoroughly

- Rinse your body completely
- Pat yourself dry with a clean towel and each shower
- Do not use lotion, cream or powder after showering

- ✓ Dress in clean, comfortable clothes

- Do not use makeup, hair products, or fragrances
- Remove all piercings



- ✓ Check into the hospital

When you check into Admitting, we will ask you to sign forms saying you agree to your treatment. Please read the forms carefully.

When your room is ready, a staff member will bring you and one helper to the pre-operative area where nurses, anesthesiologists and your surgeon will get you ready for surgery.

They will:

- Review your medicines, your allergies and other questions related to your health
- Check your heart rate, blood pressure and other vitals
- Answer any questions you have before you are brought into the operating room

Sometimes there may be a shortage of rooms or a delay in your surgery because of unexpected emergencies. If this is the case, we will try to tell you before you come to the hospital. Unfortunately, we may not know until the day you arrive. We appreciate your patience.

What to Expect After Surgery

This section gives you general information about what to expect after surgery. Your surgeon and care team in the hospital will explain more details to you. They may also give you handouts or booklets specific to your surgery.

- ✓ The first few hours after surgery

You will wake up in the recovery room. You might hear your care team call this the PACU (Post Anesthesia Care Unit). In the PACU, nurses will keep a close watch on you. It may take several hours before you are alert.

If you need to get up, please ask for help. Do not risk falling! While you recover, your surgeon will talk with your chosen helper.

When PACU nurses see you are ready, you may have one or two visitors.

If you are going home, you will leave from the PACU. If you are staying overnight, you will be taken to your room. You may still be drowsy or sleepy. This is normal.

✓ Managing pain

It is normal to have more pain, numbness and tingling about 3-9 days after your surgery. This could feel similar to before surgery. It takes nerves up to 12 months to heal after surgery. The pain, numbness and tingling should get better during this time but may never completely go away.

- **Pain Rating Scale.** You may be asked to tell us how strong your pain is using numbers between 0 and 10. A zero (0) means no pain and 10 means the worst possible pain.
- **Controlling pain.** Feeling less pain promotes sleep and healing so your doctor will prescribe medicine to help keep you comfortable. You can keep pain under best control by taking pain medicines on a schedule, before the pain gets bad. Your care team will explain this to you. If your pain is not controlled or is getting worse, speak up!
- **CPAP machine.** If you need one, make sure to use it as prescribed after your surgery, especially while on pain medicine.

Non-Prescription options:

- Put ice on the surgery site for up to 20 minutes at a time, 3-4 times per day. Do this during the first few days after your surgery
- Tylenol (acetaminophen) — Do not take more than 3000 mg per day
- You can also try taking non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) like:
 - » Advil or Motrin (ibuprofen)
 - » Aleve (naproxen)
 - » Mobic (meloxicam)

If you have had a fusion, you should not take NSAIDs until cleared by your physician.

Prescription options:

We may prescribe to you:

- Muscle relaxants like Flexeril (cyclobenzaprine), Zanaflex (tizanidine), Robaxin (methocarbamol) and Lioresal (baclofen)
- Steroids like: Prednisone taper, Medrol pack or Dexamethasone
- Nerve stabilizer like Neurontin (gabapentin), Lyrica (pregabalin), Elavil (amitriptyline)
- Opiates (narcotics); we only prescribe opioids if needed, and on a **short-term** (4-6 weeks) basis. After that time your primary care provider will prescribe your opiates.

Know the common side effect of pain medicines. These include:

- Constipation
- Upset stomach or vomiting
- Sleepiness or slower breathing
- Feeling light-headed or dizzy

A special note about strong pain medicines called narcotics or opioids

Maine law allows doctors to prescribe no more than a 7-day supply of these medicines. If you need pain medicine for more than 7 days, you will need to contact your surgeon's office to get a refill.

For more information, you can find a Pain Management Guideline handout on our webpage: mainemedicalpartners.org/neuroedu

You can help us manage your pain:

You are a partner with us in managing your pain. Here are a few things you can do:

- Tell us about your past and current use of pain medicines and alcohol so we can best manage your post-operative pain.
- Plan ahead for refills. Call the office (during normal business hours, not on weekends or holidays) when you have a 2-3 day supply of any medicine we have prescribed. We need a 48 hour notice for all refills.

✓ Preventing infections

Germs are everywhere! Help prevent infections. While at the hospital and when you go home:

- Wash your hands often:
 - » After using the bathroom
 - » After touching a cell phone or tablet
 - » Before taking medicine
 - » Before eating food
 - » When changing or cleaning a bandage or dressing



- Insist that others wash their hands before touching you. This includes family, friends and your care team
- Ask anyone who is sick to stay away until they feel better

✓ Planning for care after you leave

You may be discharged home or to Rehab. You may also need home healthcare, physical therapy, or other services while you heal. A care manager will work with you, your caregiver and your healthcare team to decide what is best for you and help with arrangements before you leave the hospital.

Going Home or to Rehab

This section explains what to expect as you leave the hospital and continue healing. Your surgeon and the care team in the hospital may also give you more detailed information specific to your surgery.

✓ Alert your driver

Whether you are leaving the hospital (being discharged) the same day or leaving after an overnight stay, someone must drive you. It is not safe for you to drive.

Your care team will tell you when it's time to contact your driver, and tell you when and where the driver should pick you up.

✓ Understand discharge instructions

Your doctor and care team will speak with you and give you written instructions about how to care for yourself at home. These are called discharge instructions. They will likely include information about

- Medicines
- Wound care
- Bathing
- Eating and drinking
- Exercise

They will also include guidelines for returning to work and other activities.

These instructions are important to surgery success and your well-being. If you don't understand them or don't think you can follow them, please speak to your doctor or nurse.

✓ Move, rest, sleep and heal

Moving around helps to wake up your body systems and get them working to help you heal. Your care team will likely help you get up and walk as soon as possible after surgery. Let the team help you to prevent falling.

At home, find a balance being gently active with resting and sleeping. If you care for young children or others, ask for help to allow you to get the rest you need.

✓ Attend post-op medical visits

You will have a follow-up medical visit with your surgeon after your surgery. You may also have a visit date with your regular doctor or other healthcare providers. Keep track of those visits and make sure to keep them.

If you need help finding a ride, call 2-1-1 to ask about resources in your area.

If you need to change or cancel, call the doctor's office and reschedule. This way someone else can have your time slot.

If you have worries about your wound or healing before your visit, call the doctor's office at 207-885-0011. A doctor will return your call even on nights or weekends.

Notes

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Parking at Maine Medical Center
22 Bramhall St., Portland, ME
207-662-0111

Patient and Visitor Parking — 880 Congress Street, Portland
Free Garage

The garage elevator signage will guide patients and visitors to enter.

Representatives and other staff are available as you enter here, to direct you to your destination.

South Lot — 107 Chadwick Street, Portland


Closed to entry after 6 p.m. on weekdays and all day on weekends and holidays.

This parking area is convenient for Patients and Visitors going to Radiology, the Pharmacy, Labs and Maine Medical Partner Outpatient Clinics.

Please call our Security and Parking Department at 207-662-2124 with any parking related questions.

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 207-885-0011

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