

## MANAGING YOUR PAIN

- At home, rely on family and friends. The more they know about your health and surgery, the more helpful they can be. Your nurse would be happy to talk to them about their questions or concerns.
- After surgery, you may be uncomfortable or have pain. It is critical that you move, take deep breaths, and cough. These early activities will help remove congestion from your lungs and prevent pneumonia.
- Keeping your pain under control is important to your well being. In order to help with your recovery, we ask that you pay attention to your level of pain and use the pain scale as illustrated below to report your level of pain. Your nurse will ask you to either use the “Faces” scale or the numbers scale.
- It is important to keep your pain out of the moderate to severe range (number 4 or greater), so do not wait until pain is severe before you let us know, or before you take your medication at home. If your pain is not relieved by your medication, or if you have any side effects, please tell your nurse or doctor. Taking pain medication prior to walking or exercising can make these activities more tolerable and help with your recover.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

- **What are Surgical Site Infections (SSIs)?**  
Surgical site infections happen when harmful germs enter your body through an incision the surgeon makes to perform an operation. The infection can involve the skin only or be more serious and involve tissues under the skin or organs.
- **What should health care providers do to prevent SSIs?**  
Practice proper hand washing techniques, wear appropriate surgical attire, clean the site where the incision will be made, ensure normal body temperature and blood sugar levels for you, and clip, not shave, any hair that has to be removed.
- **What can you do to prevent SSIs?**  
Ask lots of questions. If your doctor instructs, shower or bathe with antiseptic soap the night before and the day of your surgery. Only take antibiotics when prescribed by your doctor. Eat healthy foods. When you return home, care for your incision as instructed by your health care provider.
- **Can SSIs be treated?**  
Yes, most SSIs can be treated with antibiotics. The type of medication depends on which germ is causing the infection.



# INFORMATION GUIDE TO SURGERY

**You have been scheduled for surgery at  
Southside Medical Center on:**

**Please call Pre-Admission Testing at 804.765.6340 between 2pm - 4pm the day before your surgery to confirm your arrival time. If your surgery is on Monday, please call on Friday. It is not uncommon to be asked to arrive 2-4 hours ahead of your surgery time.**

Please read this Information Guide to Surgery in its entirety for important instructions and information.

**T**hank you for choosing Southside Medical Center for your healthcare and surgical needs. Our staff looks forward to making your surgical experience as comfortable and pleasant as possible. If you have any questions about your upcoming surgery or recuperation after reading this Information Guide to Surgery, please do not hesitate to call your surgeon at their office or our staff at 804.765.5125.

## PRE-SURGICAL VISIT

Depending on your age and medical history, you **may** need some tests before surgery. Tests may include:

- Urine and blood tests, which help rule out risk factors that may delay surgery.
- An electrocardiogram (EKG) which helps to show how well your heart is functioning.
- A chest x-ray which provides a picture of your lungs, heart and other organs (for older patients and those who smoke or have heart or lung disease).

## BEFORE SURGERY

- If you have the flu, a cold, cough, or a fever the day before your surgery, call your surgeon's office.
- To improve healing time, do not smoke for at least 48 hours before surgery. The longer you abstain from smoking before surgery the better it will be for your recovery.
- Do not eat or drink **anything** after midnight unless you have been otherwise directed. Before midnight, eat lightly and drink nonalcoholic beverages. Drinking additional liquids the night before surgery will help you feel better after surgery.
- If you have sleep apnea and use CPAP, please bring this with you if you are spending the night.
- If you are on blood thinners, and have not discussed with your surgeon whether to stop or continue them, please call your surgeon at least **7 days before** your surgery to discuss.
- You will not be able to drive after you have anesthesia for your surgery. **Confirm your ride to and from the hospital.** This person should be prepared to wait at the facility during your surgery.
- No gum, hard candy or cigarettes the day of your surgery.

## DAY OF SURGERY

- You should report to Same Day Services Registration located on the 2nd Floor lobby area of the hospital
- If you did not have a pre-surgical visit, bring your medication list on the day of your surgery.
- If you were instructed to take your morning medications before coming to the hospital take them with just a **small sip** of water.

- If you use inhalers at home, please use them the morning of surgery and bring them with you to the hospital. Do not use insulin inhalers unless instructed to do so.
- **If you are diabetic**, do not give yourself morning insulin or take any oral diabetic medication. We will check your blood sugar when you arrive the day of surgery. If your arrival time is later in the day, monitor your blood sugar as you normally would.
- Wear comfortable clothing that is easy to take on and off. You will be asked to change out of your street clothes into a personal warming gown your nurse will provide.
- **Do not bring valuables, weapons or large sums of money to the hospital.**
- Do not wear jewelry to the hospital. All jewelry and metal body piercings must be removed before surgery.
- Do not wear makeup, lotion, powder, deodorant, perfume or cologne.
- Remove fingernail or toe polish if your arm or leg is where the surgery will occur.
- If you wear dentures, partial plate, contact lens, glasses or any other prosthesis, you will be asked to remove them prior to surgery. It would be helpful if you brought the case for any of these items.
- Be prepared to provide the names of family or friends that you authorize to have access to your medical information. Your family/friends will be informed where to wait during your surgery.
- Minors (under the age of 18) or patients with a mental disability must have a natural parent or legal guardian in attendance to sign registration papers and surgical/anesthesia consent forms. A legal guardian must be prepared to show custody or guardianship papers at the time of registration.

## AFTER SURGERY

- After surgery, you will be brought to the recovery room, also known as the PACU. You will receive post-operative monitoring and constant care from a PACU Registered Nurse for approximately 30 to 90 minutes.
- The PACU registered nurse works with the anesthesiologist to decide when you can be moved from the PACU. If you will be staying in the hospital, you will be taken from the PACU to your inpatient room. Your friends and family may see you the same day as your surgery. If you are an outpatient, you will return to Same Day Services to prepare for your discharge. **Be sure you have an adult friend or family member available to drive you home from surgery. You will not be allowed to drive yourself home.**
- Patients who are physically able, will be expected to walk or sit on the edge of the bed as soon as they are able. This is essential to prevent complications such as a blood clot or a respiratory infection.
- Your doctor has given us specific instructions for your recovery care and we will discuss these with you and your family before you leave. These instructions will be written and a copy will be provided to you. If there are any instructions you do not understand, please ask the nurse to explain them to you.