



Preparing For Surgery

These are some guidelines to help you get ready for surgery with Dr Quoc Lam

Understand your surgery

- Dr Lam will explain the process of your procedure, the risks related to that procedure and the recovery process.

Understand the costs involved

- If you have private health insurance with the appropriate level of cover and there is a legitimate Medicare item number for your procedure, then a significant portion of the costs will be covered. The costs will include:
 - Gap for surgical fees
 - Gap for anaesthetic fees
 - Gap for Assistant fees
- If you do not have private health insurance, or if your private health insurance is not at the appropriate level for your surgery, or if there is no Medicare item number for your procedure, then you will be considered a “self-funded” patient. In this scenario you will carry all the costs.
 - Surgical fees
 - Anaesthetic fees
 - Hospital and theatre fees
 - Assistant fees
- If you have any concerns or uncertainty, please ask to speak to Dr Lam prior to your surgery.

Location, date and admission time

- This will be confirmed during your pre-operative consultations at Cranford House.

Fasting time for food and water

- We will clarify your fasting time for food and water pre-operatively.
 - Fasting ensures that your stomach is empty to make your anaesthetic safer. If you have a full stomach and you vomit under anaesthesia, this will put your lungs at risk. You should fast,
 - 6 hrs for food
 - 2 hrs for water (please drink up to 2hrs prior to surgery- a glass of water will suffice)
 - Fasting for food includes liquids such as broth, milk, coffee and tea as well as lollies and chewing gum.
 - It is important to not over fast as it is important that you are comfortable and hydrated prior to surgery.
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Garments

- Post-surgical garments are required for some, but not all surgeries
- Please be guided by Dr Lam and his team with the garments required for your surgery.
- Vests and abdominal binders can be purchased at Cranford House.
- Bras for breast surgery can be purchased from an outlet such as Big W, KMart or Best & Less. We would advise that you purchase the “front zip” style soft bras without an underwire. These are low cost and do the job very well.
- For more complex garments, we will direct you to a fitter pre-surgery.
- It is often better to have 2 garments so that one can be washed to maintain hygiene during your recovery.
- Garments are generally worn for 6 weeks post-surgery. This commitment is greatest in the first week to minimise swelling and bruising, but this can be relaxed as you progress through your recovery.
- Please bring your garments to hospital on the day of surgery.

Medications and health supplements

- Blood thinners such as Aspirin, Coumadin(warfarin), Xarelto(rivaroxaban), Plavix(clopidogrel), Pradaxa(dagabattran), Eliquis (dagabattrin), Effient(prasugrel) should be discussed prior to surgery. These may need to be stopped a certain period of time prior to surgery
- Anti-inflammatory medications such as Nurofen(ibuprofen) and Naproxen(Naprosyn) also act as blood thinners and should be stopped at least 14 days prior to surgery .
- Anti-diabetic medications should be discussed with your anaesthetist as some of these need to be stopped prior to surgery and other measures put in place.
- Health supplements like fish oil, glucosamine, ginseng, turmeric and ginkgo can also act as blood thinners. These should be stopped 2 weeks prior to surgery.

General Health

- **Smoking**
 - Smoking is a major risk factor for surgery. There is a high risk of wound healing complications as well as infections. This may result in further surgeries and treatment as well as unpredictable outcomes.
 - Nicotine in cigarettes stunts your blood flow to your organs and skin. Smoking needs to stop
 - at least **3 months** prior to surgery
 - **Without** any form of nicotine replacement such as **gum, vape, patches**
 - Exercise improves blood flow. To reverse the changes that nicotine causes to your blood vessel, you should exercise daily in the lead up to your surgery, but make sure not to over exercise in the week leading up to surgery.
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- **Hygiene**
 - Leading up to your surgery, pay particular attention to the areas that will be operated on.
 - Pay attention to your neck, groin and armpits and well as hair. These are areas which normally have a higher microbial count and can be a source of infection.
 - If you are having an abdominoplasty, please start cleaning your umbilicus (belly button) regularly at least 3 weeks prior to surgery.
 - Keep your skin in good condition with daily washing and moisturising
 - Please avoid skin tans prior to surgery and avoid over moisturising the day before surgery.
- **Exercise**
 - Exercise helps to open your blood vessels, therefore increasing the flow of oxygen to your skin and organs. With longer term exercise, your skin will be healthier and therefore your surgical wounds will heal better.
 - Try to exercise regularly leading up to surgery. **Do not over exercise** in the week leading up to surgery.
 - This will result in muscle trauma and therefore blood flow and protein will be directed towards your muscles for repair, when we need your resources to be directed to your surgical wounds.
- **Diet**
 - Maintain a balanced diet leading up to surgery to ensure you have the nutritional requirements to heal your wounds. Pay particular attention to having enough: **Protein, Vit C, Iron - Fe**
 - If you have a history of a nutritional deficiency or iron deficiency, please address this well in advance prior to your surgery. This may require some blood testing and supplementation through your GP.
- **Bowel Habit**
 - Try to maintain regular bowel patterns leading up to surgery. Having surgery will often cause constipation. This will be compounded by the pain medications prescribed.
 - Dr Lam will prescribe laxatives in the post-operative period to assist with this.
- **Sleep patterns**
 - Try to maintain regular sleep patterns leading up to surgery. Having surgery will often disrupt your sleep wake cycle. The sooner you can normalise this, the faster your recovery will be.

Post Surgical Support and Care

- When you are discharged from hospital, you will often need some support for daily chores.
 - Dr Lam would suggest that you remain “off-duty” for chores, meal preparation etc for about 10 days to 2 weeks depending on the surgery.
 - This will require some planning so that you have that support. Some common options that patients use are to:
 - Have their partner take carers’ leave from the time they are discharged from hospital.
 - Organise to stay at a friend’s house or with relatives who have offered to assist in the post-operative period.
 - Send their children to their grandparents, family or friends for a short time, so that they can have some respite from child-care.
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