

PAIN CONTROL

Ask the doctor or nurse these questions:

How much pain will I have after surgery?

Where will the pain be?

How long will the pain last?

Talk with your doctor about pain control choices and make a plan with your doctors and nurse to control pain.

PAIN CONTROL AFTER SURGERY

In the hospital

- Take or ask for pain relief medication when pain first begins
- Report your pain to the nurse
- Ask for pain medications before treatments and therapies that may cause pain
- Tell the doctor or nurse about pain that won't go away

At home

- Take pain medication when pain first begins and keep a record
- Take pain medications before treatments and therapies that may cause pain
- Tell your doctor about pain that won't go away

IMPORTANT

- Take medication as directed, it provides the best pain control. Nurses or staff may ask you to rate your pain 0 to 10 with 0 meaning no pain. Never worry about being a "bother." Pain can be a sign of a problem with your operation. The doctor or nurse wants to help you control your pain. Carefully follow your doctors instructions regarding breathing treatments and getting out of bed.
- If you have diabetes, be sure that you and your doctor discuss the best way to control your blood sugar before, during and after your hospital stay. High blood pressure increases the risk of infection noticeably.
- If you are overweight, losing weight will reduce the risk of infection following surgery.
- If you are a smoker, you should consider a smoking cessation program. This will reduce the chance of developing a lung infection while in the hospital and may also improve your healing abilities following surgery. GCRMC is a smoke free facility and campus.

SKIN CARE (PLANNING AHEAD FOR SURGERY)

Take a bath or shower **the night before and morning of surgery**. This helps decrease your chances of getting an infection. Do the following:

- Use a fresh bar or liquid antibacterial soap (like Dial) when you bathe or shower
- Wet your body and wash with soap and clean washcloth
- Rinse well; it is important to get all the soap off your body
- Dry well with a clean towel

AFTER YOU LEAVE THE HOSPITAL

Wound Care After you Leave the Hospital

After you leave the hospital or surgery center, it is important that your surgical site (wound) is kept clean and dry. This helps you heal faster and helps prevent infections.

Follow these instructions unless told otherwise by your doctor:

- Take a bath or shower and clean the wound – showers are best.
- After you have washed the rest of your body, use a clean washcloth, wet the wound with water and wash with soap; gently wash any soil or drainage.
- Pat dry with a clean towel.
- Apply a fresh, clean dressing and repeat later in the day, if needed.

Signs and Symptoms of Infection

The first few days after surgery, you may have pain or discomfort. The wound may be red or swollen and have some clear or a bit of blood drainage. This is normal and should be less each day. Call your doctor if you notice the following:

- Fever over 101 degrees
- Increased pain at the wound not related to activity
- Increased, cloudy, and/or colored drainage from the wound
- The wound opens up and/or becomes hot, red and tender

If you have any questions or concerns please call us at 575-443-7515.

- Put on clean clothes
- **Do not** use lotion, cream or powder
- **Do not** shave the area where the surgery will be done, unless the doctor tells you
- Wash your hands carefully after handling any type of soiled material. This is especially important after you have gone to the bathroom. Do not be afraid to remind doctors and nurses about washing their hands before working with you.

ENSURING YOUR SAFETY IN THE OR AT GCRMC

DAY OF SURGERY

Make sure your identification bracelet is correct. Before putting your identification bracelet on, check your name for correct spelling, and your birth date. Tell a hospital employee if anything is wrong; you will be given a new, corrected bracelet.

Review all the information on your consent form before you sign it. You or your legal guardian must sign a consent form before surgery can take place. Make sure your name, your surgeon's name, and the procedure are correct. If you have questions or concerns, please ask for clarification. If you don't understand, ask again.

Patient Identification Hospital employees will ask you to tell them your name, birth date, the surgery to be performed and the location on your body of the surgery or procedure. If it is appropriate, you should point to the part of the body.

Expect us to check your ID bracelet when you tell us your name and birth date. Don't be alarmed if your doctor asks you to tell him/her your name. This is how he/she makes sure everything is correct.

Preoperative Interview The nurses and doctors may ask you to answer the same questions up to 4 times. Do not be alarmed by the repetition. This is how we make sure we have everything correct.

Site Marking Your surgeon or his associate may place an ink mark or sticker where the procedure is expected to be done. The mark should not rub off easily. If it does, please tell a nurse. It is very important your doctors and nurses see that mark after you go to sleep, but before surgery begins.

Do not mark non-operative body sites. This can cause confusion after you are asleep.

Just Before Surgery Begins After you are asleep, and just before surgery starts, everyone in the operating room, will stop and take a short "time out" to check one last time that you are the correct patient and they are doing the correct procedure on the correct body part.

What can you do? You are the most important part of the healthcare team. By becoming informed and involved in making decision about your care, you will play a vital role in making your care safe.