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PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Getting Ready for Surgery

This information will help you get ready for your surgery at Memorial Sloan Kettering's (MSK's) Memorial Hospital, Josie Robertson Surgery Center (JRSC), or MSK Monmouth. Review these instructions 10 days before your surgery.

## Before Your Surgery

### Ask about your medications

You'll need to stop taking certain medications before your surgery. Your doctor or nurse will speak with you about which medications you should and should not take. Read the resources *Common Medications Containing Aspirin and Other Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/common\\_meds](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/common_meds)) and *Herbal Remedies and Cancer Treatment* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/herbal\\_remedies](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/herbal_remedies)) that your nurse gave you.

Tell your doctor or nurse if you're currently taking any pain medications or anti-anxiety medications. It's important to keep taking these medications on schedule, even during your treatment. You may be able to take them on the morning of your surgery if needed.

### About sleep apnea

Sleep apnea is a common breathing disorder that causes a person to stop breathing for short periods of time while sleeping. The most common type is obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). With OSA, the airway becomes completely blocked during sleep. OSA can cause serious problems during and after surgery.

Tell us if you have sleep apnea or if you think you might have it. If you use a breathing machine (such as a CPAP) for sleep apnea, bring it with you the day of your surgery.

## Arrange for someone to take you home

You must have a responsible care partner take you home after your procedure. Make sure to plan this before the day of your procedure.

If you don't have someone to take you home, call one of the agencies below. They will send someone to go home with you. There's usually a charge for this service, and you will need to provide transportation.

### Agencies in New York

Partners in Care: 888-735-8913

Caring People: 877-227-4649

### Agencies in New Jersey

Caring People: 877-227-4649

We recommend that you have someone to help at home for the first 24 hours after surgery.

## Complete a Health Care Proxy form

If you haven't already completed a Health Care Proxy form, we recommend you complete one now. A health care proxy is a legal document that identifies the person who will speak for you if you're unable to communicate for yourself. The person you identify is called your health care agent. They can read our resource *How to Be a Health Care Agent* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/health\\_care\\_agent](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/health_care_agent)) to understand their role and know what to expect.

If you're interested in completing a Health Care Proxy form, talk with your nurse. If you have completed one already, or if you have any other advance directive, bring it with you to your next appointment. Read our resource *Advance Care Planning* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/advance\\_care\\_planning](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/advance_care_planning)) for more information.

## Buy your supplies

### Hibiclens®

Buy a bottle of Hibiclens (chlorhexidine) cleanser, if needed. Hibiclens is a skin cleanser that kills germs for 24 hours after using it. Showering with Hibiclens before surgery will help lower your risk of infection after surgery. You can buy it at your local pharmacy without a prescription. Some surgeries don't require you to wash with Hibiclens.

## Bowel preparation

You may need to clean out your bowels before your surgery. Your nurse will tell you how and tell you what supplies you need. You may also want to buy clear liquids to drink the day before your surgery, if you need to. Read the resource *Clear Liquid Diet* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/clear\\_liquid\\_diet](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/clear_liquid_diet)) for examples. Some surgeries don't require a bowel preparation.

## The Day Before Your Surgery

A staff member from the Admitting Office will call you after 2:00 PM the day before your surgery. If your surgery is scheduled for a Monday, they will call you on the Friday before. If you don't get a call by 7:00 PM, call 212-639-5014.

The staff member will tell you what time to arrive at the hospital for your surgery. They'll also remind you where to go on the day of your surgery. This will be one of the following locations:

<p><b>In New York:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presurgical Center (PSC) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor 1275 York Avenue (between East 67<sup>th</sup> and East 68<sup>th</sup> Streets) M Elevator to 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor</li><li>• Presurgical Center (PSC) on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor 1275 York Avenue (between East 67<sup>th</sup> and East 68<sup>th</sup> Streets) B elevator to 6<sup>th</sup> Floor</li><li>• Josie Robertson Surgery Center (JRSC) 1133 York Avenue (between East 61<sup>st</sup> and East 62<sup>nd</sup> Streets)</li></ul>	<p><b>In New Jersey:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MSK Monmouth 480 Red Hill Road Middletown, NJ 07748</li></ul>
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If you have any changes in your health or you need to cancel your surgery for any reason, call your surgeon. Offices are usually open Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. After 5:00 PM, during the weekend, and on holidays, call 212-639-2000 and ask for the doctor that is covering for your surgeon.

# The Evening Before Your Surgery

Follow any special instructions your doctor or nurse gave you about your diet or medications.

## Start your bowel preparation

If your surgeon told you that you'll need to do a bowel preparation, you'll need to start it 1 day before your surgery. Follow the instructions you received.

## Shower with Hibiclens

If you were instructed to shower using Hibiclens, do this tonight and tomorrow morning. To shower using Hibiclens:

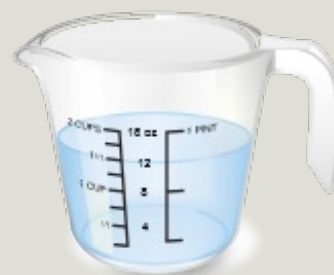
1. Use your normal shampoo to wash your hair. Rinse your head well.
2. Use your normal soap to wash your face and genital area. Rinse your body well.
3. Open the Hibiclens bottle. Pour some solution into your hand or a washcloth.
4. Move away from the shower stream to avoid rinsing off the Hibiclens too soon.
5. Rub the Hibiclens gently over your body from your neck to your feet. Don't put the Hibiclens on your face or genital area.
6. Move back into the shower stream to rinse off the Hibiclens with warm water.
7. Dry yourself off with a clean towel after your shower.
8. Don't put on any lotion, cream, deodorant, makeup, powder, perfume, or cologne after your shower.

## Sleep

Go to bed early and get a full night's sleep.

## Instructions for eating and drinking before your surgery

- Do not eat anything after midnight the night before your surgery. This includes hard candy and gum.
- Between midnight and up until 2 hours before your scheduled arrival time, you may drink a total of 12 ounces of water (see figure).
- Starting 2 hours before your scheduled arrival time, do not eat or drink anything. This includes water.



## The Day of Your Surgery

Follow any special instructions your nurse gave you about your diet.

### Take your medications as instructed

Your doctor or nurse may have instructed you to take certain medications on the morning of your surgery. Take only those medications with a sip of water.

### Shower with Hibiclens

If you were instructed to shower using Hibiclens, use it the same way that you did last night.

### What to bring

- A list of all the medications you're taking, including patches and creams.
- Your CPAP machine for sleep apnea, if you have one.
- Your Health Care Proxy form, if you have completed one.
- Your portable music player, if you choose. However, someone will need to hold this and any other personal items for you when you go into surgery.

## Things to remember

- Don't wear any metal objects. Remove all jewelry, including body piercings. The equipment used during your surgery can cause burns if it touches metal.
- Don't put on any lotion, cream, deodorant, makeup, powder, perfume, or cologne.
- Leave valuables, such as credit cards, jewelry, and your checkbook, at home.
- If you wear contact lenses, wear your glasses instead. Wearing contact lenses during surgery can damage your eyes. Remember to bring a case for them.
- If you're currently menstruating (have your monthly period), use a sanitary pad, not a tampon. You'll get disposable underwear, as well as a pad if needed.

## Get ready for surgery

- When it's time to change for surgery, you'll get a hospital gown, robe, and nonskid socks to wear.
- The exact starting time of surgery may depend on the length of the surgery scheduled before yours. Your nurse will speak with you if there are any unexpected delays.
- Before you're taken into the operating room, you'll need to remove your hearing aids, dentures, prosthetic device(s), wig, and religious articles.
- Once your nurse has seen you, your visitors can keep you company as you wait for your surgery to begin. When it's time for your surgery, your visitor(s) will be taken to the waiting area. Your visitors should read *Information for Family and Friends for the Day of Surgery* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/information\\_family\\_friends](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/information_family_friends)). A nurse will take your visitors to the recovery room when you wake up from your surgery.

# Helpful Phone Numbers

## **Anesthesia**

212-639-6840

Call with any questions about anesthesia.

## **Bobst International Center**

888-675-7722

MSK welcomes patients from around the world. If you're an international patient, call for help arranging your care.

## **Patient Billing**

646-227-3378

Call if you have questions about preauthorization with your insurance company. This is also called preapproval.

## **Patient Representative Office**

212-639-7202

Call if you have any questions about the Health Care Proxy form or if you have any concerns about your care.

## **Private Duty Nursing Office**

212-639-6892

You may request private nurses or companions. Call for more information.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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