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PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Information for Family and Friends for the Day of Surgery

This information explains what to expect on the day of your friend or family member's surgery at Memorial Sloan Kettering's (MSK) main hospital.

## Before the Surgery

After getting at the hospital, the patient will be asked to provide their contact information for the person who will be meeting with the surgeon after the surgery. This is the same person who will get updates from the nurse liaison during the surgery. If the patient is having an outpatient procedure, they will also be asked to provide contact information for the person who will be taking them home.

Once the patient checks in at the concierge desk, they will go to the Presurgical Center (PSC) to be examined before their surgery. Sometimes, they may need to wait before they are admitted to the PSC.

In the PSC, the nurse will do a full exam on the patient. One person can come with the patient to the PSC, but other visitors should wait in the waiting area. If the patient wants, other visitors can join them after the nurse finishes the exam.

When the operating room (OR) is ready, a member of the surgical team will come take the patient into the OR. They will get the patient ready for surgery. This can take 15 to 90 minutes. Then, the surgery will start.

Please remember the following:

- **Do not bring food or drinks to the waiting area.** Patients can't eat or drink before their surgery or procedure
- Our patients are at high risk for infection. Please don't visit if you have any cold or flu symptoms (fever, sneezing, sniffles, or a cough) We may ask you

to wear a mask if there are any concerns about your health.

- If the patient brought any valuables, such as a cellphone, iPod, or iPad, please keep them safe for them during surgery.
- Sometimes, surgeries can be delayed. We make every effort to tell you when this happens.

## During the Surgery

After the patient is taken to the OR, please wait in the main lobby on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, where you will be updated by the nurse liaison. While you're waiting, here are some things you can do:

- Food and drinks are available in the cafeteria and gift shop. You can also bring your own food and eat it in the cafeteria.
- The coat-check room is located at the bottom of the escalator on the ground level. It's open Monday through Friday from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM.
- Wireless Internet access is available in most areas of the hospital. The wifi network name is MSK\_guest. You can also use the computers in the room off of the main lobby.
- Please be respectful of others while using your cellphone. Use the designated area to take and make calls on your cellphone. It may be helpful to bring your phone charger with you to the hospital.
- The Mary French Rockefeller All Faith Chapel is an interfaith chapel located in room M106 near the main lobby on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. It's open 24 hours a day for meditation and prayer.
- The Patient Recreation Pavilion is open daily from 9:00 AM to 8:00 PM for patients and their visitors. Children are allowed in the pavilion as long as they're supervised by an adult. The pavilion has arts and crafts, a library, an outdoor area, and scheduled entertainment events. To get to the pavilion, take the M elevators to the 15<sup>th</sup> floor.

## **Surgery updates**

A nurse liaison will keep you updated on the progress of the patient's surgery. They will:

- Give you information about the patient.
- Get you ready for your meeting with the surgeon.
- Arrange for you to visit the patient in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU).

To contact the nurse liaison:

- From inside the hospital, you can use a hospital courtesy phone. These are located on the walls all around the hospital. Dial 2000 and ask for beeper 9000. Please be patient because this can take up to 2 minutes.
- From outside of the hospital, call 212-639-2000. Ask for beeper 9000.
- Ask the information desk staff to contact the nurse liaison for you.

## **After the Surgery**

### **Meeting with the surgeon**

When the patient's surgery is over, we will call you and ask you to go back to the information desk. They will tell you where to go to meet with the surgeon.

After meeting with the surgeon, go back to the information desk and let them know you've finished your meeting.

### **Visiting the patient in the PACU**

After surgery, the patient will be taken to the PACU. When patients first get to the PACU, they're often sleepy and want to rest. It can take some time for a patient to be ready to see their visitors. We will let you know when they're ready to have visitors. You can use this time to take a walk, get something to eat, or relax in the waiting area until the patient is ready to see you.

When the patient is ready for visitors, a family nurse will either call your name out in the waiting area or call your cellphone and let you that you can now visit the patient in the PACU. The family nurse, volunteer, or staff member will take you to the PACU for a short visit.

If the patient is staying overnight in the PACU, you can visit them a second time. No one is allowed to stay overnight in the PACU with the patient, except for caregivers of pediatric patients.

Please follow these guidelines before your visit in the PACU:

- Do not use your cellphone.
- Make sure your cellphone is on silent before entering.
- Put on an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (such as Purell®) or wash your hands before entering. There are hand sanitizer stations located throughout the hospital.
- Do not bring food or flowers into the PACU.
  - Flowers can be stored in the flower room located on the entrance floor of the main hospital until patients are allowed to have them. Flowers are usually allowed when the patient moves to their inpatient room.

Please remember that only a limited number of visitors can go into the PACU. This is to keep the area quiet and allow the patients to rest and receive care.

While visiting the patient in the PACU:

- Speak quietly.
- Respect other patients' privacy by staying at the bedside of your friend or family member.
- If any PACU patient needs special nursing attention, we may ask you to leave or to delay your visit.

The nurse will update you with the plan of care for the patient, such as whether the patient is staying overnight and when they will be moved to an inpatient room.

- If the patient is staying overnight, you may visit them again in the PACU.
- If the patient transfers to an inpatient room, a staff member will let you know, and you can meet the patient in their inpatient room.
- If the patient is going home the same day, a caregiver must take them home.

After your visit, a staff member will take you back to the waiting area.

We will give you a card with the PACU phone number. Please choose 1 person that we should call for updates.

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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Information for Family and Friends for the Day of Surgery - Generated on June 25, 2019

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