

# After Surgery Care Options

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Every patient's surgery and recovery experience is different. At University of Michigan Health, we have many care teams working together to take care of your needs. Since not every patient's care needs are the same, our teams are designed to give you options for your recovery after surgery.

## Where will I get care and heal after my surgery?

While your immediate recovery from surgery will take place in a University of Michigan hospital, you may use many different clinics and services for your longer recovery. The University of Michigan has a large team with many resources to help you with your recovery.

## How long will I be in the hospital after surgery?

This depends on your surgery, as well as many other factors. Talk with your **surgeon** (the doctor doing your surgery) about your surgery and how long they expect you to be recovering in the hospital.

For some patients, your care team may recommend that you do some of your recovery at a **rehabilitation (rehab) center**. A rehab center is a special **facility** (place that provides medical care) that focuses on treating people recovering from surgery. They may recommend that you stay at a rehab center for the following reasons:

- You can continue to get physical and occupational therapy. Rehab centers can provide physical and occupational therapy more often, and they may have more equipment and staff available to help patients practice skills needed for recovery.
  - **Physical therapy** helps improve your ability to move your body.

- **Occupational therapy** helps improve your ability to do different activities.
- You need help with your required care after surgery (such as changing your bandages or getting intravenous (IV) antibiotics).

During your hospital stay, your discharge planning team (staff who will help you plan for leaving the hospital after your surgery) may start to talk about rehab center options with you. If your surgeon thinks going to a rehab center is a possibility, you should visit [Medicare.gov/care-compare](https://www.Medicare.gov/care-compare) online before your surgery. There, you will find a list of rehab facilities with ratings. Think about making a list of your top 5 rehab facility preferences to bring with you to the hospital and share with the discharge planning team. This will help them plan your discharge by checking if there's space for you at different facilities and getting insurance approvals.

### **What type of after surgery care can I get at home?**

This depends on where you will be staying after you leave the hospital and if it is safe for you to be at home. You will typically work with our physical and occupational therapists to decide if you are safe to go home. This can be a complex decision, based partly on your health and ability to function, as well as whether you or another person can take care of your medical needs at home. If you are safe to go home, then the medical team and discharge planning team will work with you to figure out the best options for the rest of your recovery.

### **What if the physical and occupational therapists decide I am safe to go home, but I still need some medical care?**

You may need to stay in the hospital to continue to get some medical care, or you may qualify for the University of Michigan's Hospital Care at Home program. This program allows you to get the same medical care you'd get in the hospital, but in the comfort of your discharge location (where you go to stay

once you leave the hospital). For most people, the discharge location will be your home, but for some it may be the home of a friend or family member.

### **What are the qualifications for the Hospital Care at Home program?**

- You must stay at home. This means no driving or leaving home. Once you're ready to leave the hospital and start the Hospital Care at Home program, paramedics will drive you home by ambulance.
- Your home or other discharge location must be within Washtenaw County, western Wayne County, and southern Livingston County. The Hospital Care at Home program only services homes in these areas. The discharge planning team will help you figure out if your home or discharge location is in these areas.
- Your insurance company must cover this type of home care.

### **What can I expect with the Hospital Care at Home program?**

- You should get a daily visit from a clinician (a doctor, a physician assistant, or a nurse practitioner). They will check on you and change your care plan as needed.
- Depending on your medical needs, you may get up to 2 more visits throughout the day from a visiting nurse or a community paramedic. They can help with things like changing your dressings (the bandages on your incisions, cuts from surgery, or other wounds) or giving you your IV medications. You also can get x-rays or ultrasounds in the home.

### **I am home now, and I just noticed signs of infection (redness, swelling) around my incision Should I call the surgery clinic or go to the ER?**

Always call your surgery clinic first if you are concerned about your incision, or if you have any other health concerns after surgery. They may be able to set up a visit for you that day. This visit could be in-person in the clinic or the

Advanced Diagnostics and Therapeutics Unit (ADTU), or through telehealth (a video or phone call).

## **What is the Advanced Diagnostics and Therapeutics Unit (ADTU)?**

The ADTU is a clinic which serves all Michigan Medicine patients. It is a place where you can get an appointment on the same day that you call. It is also where you can get longer appointments (beyond the standard 15-30 minute appointment), for up to 6 hours. This helps our patients avoid going to the Emergency Department in many cases.

## **What can the ADTU do for me?**

ADTU patients can receive many different care services at their appointments, which can be up to 6 hours long. During your appointment, you can have imaging (such as x-rays and CT scans) done if you need them. Other care options in the ADTU include labs, minor procedures, consults with other teams, and getting IV medications such as antibiotics (medication to prevent infection) or diuretics (“water pills”).

The ADTU team will work with your surgery team to make sure you are getting the care you need. You may go home after your ADTU appointment, or if you need more care, you may be admitted to the hospital or discharged to your home with the Hospital Care at Home program.

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