

# What You Need to Know Before and After Your Surgery

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## Before your surgery

- Identify a support person. A support person is someone you can count on to help you after surgery. The support person may need to be available 24/7 to help you.
- Some patients need to go to a **skilled nursing facility (SNF)** for **subacute rehabilitation (SAR)** after surgery. Research different facilities and talk with your care team about which ones may be right for you.
- Bring an up-to-date list of the medications you are currently taking to all your appointments, including the day of your surgery.
- Do not smoke or drink alcohol before or during your hospital stay. If necessary, work with your doctor to reduce or quit your smoking or drinking.
- Do not drive to the hospital on the day of your surgery. Work with friends and family to find someone to drive you, or to figure out how you will get to the hospital without driving.
- Check the hospital's website for the current policy on visitors:  
[www.UofMHealth.org](http://www.UofMHealth.org).

## During your hospital stay

- When you get to your room after surgery, we ask that you walk from the stretcher to your bed (unless your surgeon tells you not to). Walking a couple steps after surgery has been proven to speed up recovery.
- Depending on your procedure, you may need to use special equipment after you leave the hospital. We will teach you how to use some

equipment while you are with us. Be sure to ask us any questions you may have.

- Pain after your surgery is normal. Your care team will work with you to help make your pain manageable. This may include talking about how much pain medication you should take.
- Throughout your hospital stay, have your support person check in with your care team for any education they may need to help you with your recovery.

### **After your hospital stay**

- Pain after your hospital stay is normal. Your care team will work with you to help make your pain manageable. This may include talking about how much pain medication you should take.
- If you have a hard time getting supplies, resources may be available from your care team. **Loan closets** (programs that give people free or low-cost medical equipment) may also be a helpful resource.
- Please do not smoke or drink alcohol after your hospital stay. This can slow down the healing process.

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