

SpineFAQs

Pre-Op Instructions

Once surgery has been decided upon, you have some things to think about. In addition to making sure your questions have been answered, you must make arrangements for the following:

- You will be off work for a period of time for your surgery. Make sure your employer is made aware about the duration we discussed. In addition, you may have paperwork for FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) or short term disability benefits that you have. Make sure we take care of that so that you do not lose time/benefit.
- Make sure that you have someone who can help you right after surgery. Most people do not need a baby-sitter, but you will be sore and tired after surgery. Someone around to help with the things of daily living (cooking, cleaning, helping you get out) can make a big difference. In addition, you will need someone to drive you to and from surgery.
- If necessary, I may have you see your regular doctor (and possibly others such as your cardiologist if you have one) in order to make sure you are healthy enough to undergo surgery.
- You will likely be asked to come to the facility prior to your date of surgery for a pre-op evaluation by the anesthesiologists and their staff. This visit is important because pre-operative lab work is done, your health is assessed, and it gives you an opportunity to ask questions about anesthesia. Make sure you tell them about any medications you take (including supplements and over the counter drugs), any allergies you have to medications, if you have had problems with anesthesia in the past, and whether you currently use any illegal drugs (especially cocaine, crack, or meth).

What should I bring to the hospital?

- Make sure you bring an accurate list of your medications. If you must, bring the actual bottles. This, however, is risky in the event that the bottles are lost.
- Bring your glasses, dentures, hearing aides etc. You will be asked to remove them prior to surgery, but you will be filling out some forms and signing important documents.
- DO NOT wear/bring any jewelry. This includes piercings.
- If you are spending the night, make sure you bring some toiletries, some slippers and some pajamas if you like.
- Make sure to bring your identification and your insurance information and cards.

Other pre-operative instructions:

- DO NOT eat or drink anything after midnight the night of your surgery. This includes a cup of coffee or soda the morning of your surgery. You CAN take your regular morning medicines (unless instructed otherwise) with a sip of water.
- DO NOT smoke or drink alcohol the night before your surgery or the day of your surgery.
- DO NOT take aspirin, anti-inflammatory medications (like Advil, and Aleve), blood thinning medications (like Coumadin and Plavix) 5-7 days prior to your surgery.
- Make sure you arrive on time (or earlier) than you are instructed so that there are no delays in your surgery.