

PATIENT PRE-SURGICAL INSTRUCTION PACKET





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WELCOME & THANK YOU

FROM VAIL HEALTH



Thank you for choosing Vail Health for your surgical needs.

Our knowledgeable staff is dedicated to making patients feel as comfortable as possible. This step-by-step instruction packet has been created as a resource to prepare you and your family members or caregivers for surgery. In addition, our staff will guide you throughout the surgical process.

Pre-Surgical Checklist

Please use this check list as a guide throughout the surgical process.

Initial consult with surgeon

- Surgical Date _____
- Time _____
- You will be notified 48-24 hours prior to surgical date of the exact time to arrive at the Vail Health Hospital.

Does your surgeon require a pre-operative evaluation from your primary care physician?

- The pre-operative evaluation is not always necessary and depends upon your individual health needs.
- Date and time of appointment _____
- Be sure to know if the surgeon is requesting specific testing or lab results.

Does your surgeon require a pre-operative evaluation from a specialist such as a Cardiologist or Pulmonologist?

- Date and time of appointment _____
- Be sure to know if the surgeon is requesting specific testing or lab results.

Pre-Surgical Phone Interview with Vail Health.

- You will be contacted to review your medical history for our anesthesia team.
- Have your current medications including dosage and frequency available.

Hibiclens Soap (4% Chlorhexidine Gluconate)

- Wash 1 _____
- Wash 2 _____
- Wash 3 _____
- Wash 4 (morning of surgery) _____

Do you have a ride home from the hospital?

Will you need any medical equipment such as crutches, walker or ice machine?

- Contact your surgeon's office to arrange these items.

The night before surgery.

- [Don't Eat Anything After Midnight](#) the night before your surgery.
- Small sips of water are okay throughout the night. [Stop all fluids 2 hours before you arrive](#) to check in for your surgery.

Day of your surgery.

- If you were instructed to take any medications on the morning of surgery, it is okay to do so with a small sip of water.
- Check in at the admissions desk on the first floor next to the Emergency Department at Vail Health.
- Bring insurance information and form of payment.

Going home from Vail Health Hospital.

- Drop off any Prescriptions at Pharmacy located on the first floor of Vail Health Hospital.
- Physical Therapy Appointment
 - Date _____
 - Time _____

Step 1: Pre-Surgical Interview

Once your surgery has been scheduled, you will be contacted by a nurse in our Pre-Surgical Planning Department, who will conduct a phone interview. The purpose of this interview is to review your medical and surgical history for the anesthesia team, instruct you on what medications to take on the morning of surgery and provide preoperative instructions. This intake process is a very important step in preparing for your surgery. Please have the following information ready for this interview:

- **A list of all medications, vitamins and herbal supplements you are taking (both prescription and over-the-counter), including dose and frequency.**
- **A list of past surgical procedures.**

Step 2: Hibiclens Soap (use for three days leading up to surgery)

Skin is not sterile, and germs on your skin can increase the risk of infection. Washing with a special soap that contains 4% Chlorhexidine has been shown to decrease the risk of infection. Please ask your surgeon's office for a bottle. It is also available over the counter at your local pharmacy. Follow the steps below and shower daily, beginning three days before surgery and the day of surgery before coming to the hospital.

- **Step 1:** Wash your hair, face and body with your normal soap, shampoo and conditioner.
- **Step 2:** Turn off water.
- **Step 3:** Pour a small portion of Hibiclens soap onto a clean, wet washcloth and apply to your entire body from the neck down avoiding your face, hair and genitalia.
- **Step 4:** Let soap sit on skin for three minutes.
- **Step 5:** Turn on water and rinse Hibiclens soap off your body.
- **Step 6:** Use a clean towel after each wash.

Step 3: Confirm Surgery Time

You will be contacted by your surgeon's scheduler 24-48 hours before your surgery with an exact time to arrive at Vail Health.

Step 4: Getting Ready for Surgery

Please make sure all items in the following checklist are completed.

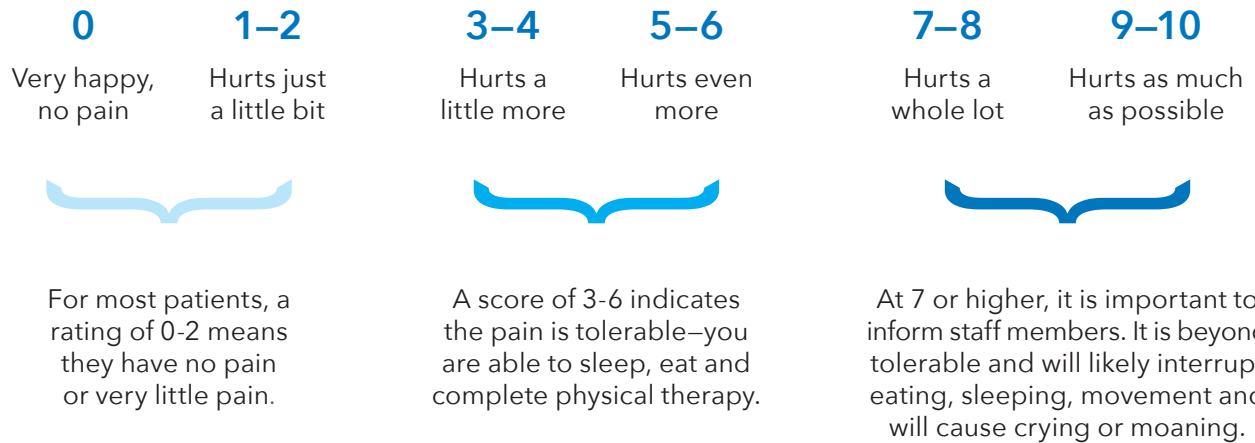
- Report any cuts, abrasions or rashes to your surgeon prior to the day of surgery.
- Report any current cold or flu-like symptoms to your surgeon prior to the day of check-in time.
- Drink plenty of fluids the day before your surgery. After midnight, drink only small sips of clear fluids (water, apple juice, cranberry juice). Stop drinking all fluids two hours before your surgery.
- Refrain from drinking alcohol or smoking for 24 hours prior to surgery.
- **DO NOT EAT ANYTHING AFTER MIDNIGHT** (this includes candy and chewing gum)
- Take medications that have been instructed by your surgeon or pre-surgical planning nurse. You may take medications with a small sip of water.
- Don't apply lotions, powder or deodorant to your body.
- Wear comfortable clothing to the hospital.
- Do not shave hair at or near your surgical site for three days prior to your surgery.
- Do not wear make-up or jewelry on the day of surgery.
- Bring something to read, watch or listen to in the event of an unexpected delay.
- Do not bring your medications to the hospital.
- Drop off prescriptions at the pharmacy to get filled.
- Bring all insurance information and a form of payment.
- **Check in to Admissions upon arrival.**

Instructions & Helpful Tips for Family Members

- The nurses may need a few minutes to prepare the patient for surgery, at which time you may be asked to stay in the waiting area.
- Once the patient is ready for surgery, you may be invited to sit with him/her in the pre-operative area until he/she goes to surgery.
- Generally, it takes about 1½ hours from the point of admissions check-in until the patient heads to the operating room.
- Once the patient is taken to the operating room, family members will be provided with information on how to see the progression of the patient throughout the surgical process.
- There is a waiting room located on the 3rd floor across from the pre-operative area.
- The hospital cafeteria is located in the basement–Level B.
- When the patient is awake and ready for visitors, you will receive a call from the nurse inviting you into the recovery area.

Communicating Your Pain Level

It's important for you to be able to describe your level of pain to your doctors and nurses. The 10 point pain scale is a standardized method that any healthcare organizations use to help patients communicate their pain level by turning the pain you are feeling into a numerical rating.



Step 5: Pain Management After Surgery... What to Expect

Here at Vail Health, we strive to keep all patients as comfortable as possible regardless of the type of surgery or procedure.

Satisfactory pain control is one of our top priorities, which is why we offer a 24-hour Acute Pain Service, including an acute pain team comprised of an anesthesiologist and nurse available to work with your surgical team and manage your pain around the clock.

By using multiple techniques, our goal is to keep your pain at a tolerable level. We do not expect that you will be pain-free immediately after or within the first 24-72 hours of surgery. Our goal is to control your pain.



• Pain Medications

Medications are recommended for patients with severe and intolerable pain.

- Your surgeon will manage your home pain medication regimen.
- Vail Health offers an on-site pharmacy for your convenience.
- Take your medication exactly as it is prescribed.
- It's important to decrease and eliminate the use of pain medications as soon as possible.

• Safety Guidelines for Pain Management

- Report any reactions and/or allergies to medications to your physician or nurse.
- If the pain medicine is not providing relief, talk to your physician, nurse or pharmacist.
- DO NOT drink alcohol or take any other medications that may cause drowsiness without informing your physician or nurse.
- DO NOT drive while taking pain medications.
- Report and treat side effects immediately. Call a physician if you experience sleep apnea, slowing or trouble with breathing from opioids.

Step 6: Manage Possible Problems or Side Effects After Surgery

- **Constipation**—To prevent constipation while taking pain medication:
 - Increase fiber in your diet by eating fruits, vegetables, whole grains and beans. If you cannot get enough fiber from food, add a fiber supplement to your diet.
 - Drink enough water (8-10 glasses daily) and other non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated fluids to keep your urine clear or pale yellow in color.
 - Go to the bathroom when you have the urge to go. Do not hold it.
 - Take one of the following over-the-counter medications for as long as you are taking narcotic pain medication. Stop taking it if you develop diarrhea. (The following are adult dosages.)
 - o Docusate 100mg by mouth two times a day
 - o Senna 17.2mg by mouth once a day
 - o Miralax 17g by mouth once a day
- If you become constipated and have not had a bowel movement within two days, take one of the following over-the-counter medications until you resume a normal bowel regimen. Generally, suppositories and enemas work more quickly compared to pills. Stop taking if you develop diarrhea. (The following are adult dosages.)
 - Milk of Magnesia 30mL by mouth twice a day
 - Mineral Oil 30 mL by mouth once a day
 - Magnesium citrate 150mL by mouth once a day
 - Bisacodyl 10mg rectally once a day
 - Fleet Enema 133mL rectally once a day
- **Nausea or Vomiting**—Usually goes away within a few days and can be prevented or treated with anti-nausea medicines. You should also eat food before taking any pain medication.
- **Drowsiness**—Usually goes away within a few days. Report severe drowsiness.
- **Itching**—Usually goes away in a few days but can require switching to another medication.

- **Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)**

- Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) occurs when an abnormal blood clot forms in a large vein. These clots usually develop in the lower leg, thigh, or pelvis, but can also occur in other large veins in the body.
- If you develop DVT and it is diagnosed correctly and quickly, it can be treated.
- Since the symptoms of DVT can be similar to other conditions, like a pulled muscle, this often leads to a delay in diagnosis. Some people with DVT may have no symptoms at all.

DVT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

The following are the most common and usually occur in the affected limb:

- Recent swelling of the limb
- Skin that may be warm to the touch
- Unexplained pain or tenderness
- Redness of the skin

- **Pulmonary Embolism (PE)**

- DVT can cause a life-threatening complication called a Pulmonary Embolism (PE).
- Part or all of the blood clot may break off and travel through the bloodstream into the lungs.
- A blood clot in the lungs can be life threatening and can cause death.

SIGN & SYMPTOMS OF A PULMONARY EMBOLISM

If you have any of these symptoms it is a MEDICAL EMERGENCY and you should SEEK MEDICAL HELP IMMEDIATELY:

- Recent or sudden shortness of breath
- Chest pain or discomfort that worsens with a deep breath or coughing
- Coughing up blood
- Sudden collapse

BEFORE AND DURING HOSPITALIZATION

- Before surgery talk to your health care provider about prevention of blood clots.
- Tell your health care provider if you have any risk factors for DVT.
- If you have been confined to bed, move around as soon as possible.
- Compression stockings help to prevent blood clots.
- SCDs are compression devices that wrap around your calf. SCDs inflate and deflate to “pump” your calf to keep your blood flowing.
- Anticoagulant medications may also be given to help prevent blood clots.

EVERYONE HAS A ROLE IN MAKING HEALTH CARE SAFE

Your health care involves doctors,
nurses, technicians and **you**.



By being an active, involved and informed member of your health care team, you play an important role in making your care safe. Research shows that patients who take part in decisions about their health care are more likely to have better outcomes.

The following are practical ways you can be an active participant in the safety of your care.

Speak Up

- If you have questions or concerns, speak up. If you don't understand, ask again.
- Ask the doctor to initial the area that is to be operated upon, so that there's no confusion in the operating room.
- If you think you are about to receive the wrong medication, tell the doctor or nurse about your concern.
- If you think the health care professional has confused you with another patient, tell him/her who you are and ask him/her to confirm your identity.

Pay Attention

- Tell your nurse or doctor if something doesn't seem right.
- Expect health care workers to introduce themselves when they enter your room. If they don't, ask them to. Look for their identification badges.
- Notice whether your caregivers have washed their hands. Hand washing is the most important way to prevent the spread of infections. Don't be afraid to remind a doctor or nurse to do this.
- Know what time of day you normally receive a medication. If it doesn't happen, bring this to the attention of your nurse or doctor.
- Make sure your nurse or doctor confirms your identity by checking your wristband or asking your name before he/she administers any medication or treatment.

Educate Yourself

- Ask all doctors treating you about the specialized training and experience that qualifies him/her to treat you.
- Gather information about your condition. Good sources include your doctor, your library, respected websites and support groups.
- Write down important facts your doctor tells you so that you can look for additional information later. Ask your doctor if he/she has any written information you can keep.
- Thoroughly read all medical forms and make sure you understand them before you sign anything. If you don't understand, ask your doctor or nurse to explain them.
- Make sure you are familiar with the operation of any equipment that is being used in your care. If you will be using oxygen at home, do not smoke or allow anyone to smoke near you while oxygen is in use.

Have an Advocate

- Your advocate can ask questions that you may not think of while you are under stress.
- Your advocate can also help remember answers to questions you have asked, and speak up for you if you cannot.
- Make sure this person understands your preferences for care and your wishes concerning resuscitation and life support.
- Review consents for treatment with your advocate before you sign them and make sure you both understand exactly what you are agreeing to.

- Make sure your advocate understands the type of care you will need when you get home and knows what to look for if your condition is getting worse and whom to call for help.

Know Your Medications

- Ask about the purpose of the medication and ask for written information about it, including its brand and generic names. Also inquire about the side effects of the medication.
- If you do not recognize a medication, verify that it is for you. Ask about oral medications before swallowing, and read the contents of bags of Intravenous (IV) fluids. If you're not well enough to do this, ask your advocate to do it.
- If you are given an IV, ask the nurse how long it should take for the liquid to "run out." Tell the nurse if it doesn't seem to be dripping properly (too fast or too slow).
- Whenever you are going to receive a new medication, tell your doctors and nurses about allergies you have or negative reactions you have had to medications in the past.
- If you are taking multiple medications, ask your doctor or pharmacist if it is safe to take those medications together. This holds true for vitamins, herbal supplements and over-the-counter drugs too.
- Make sure you can read the handwriting on any prescriptions written by your doctor. If you can't read it, the pharmacist may not be able to either.

Participate in Decisions

- You and your doctor should agree on exactly what will be done during each step of your care.
- Know who will be taking care of you, how long the treatment will last and how you should feel.
- More tests or medications may not always be better. Ask your doctor what a new test or medication is likely to achieve.
- Keep copies of your medical records from previous hospitalizations and share them with your health care team.
- Don't be afraid to seek a second opinion. If you are unsure about the nature of your illness/injury and the best treatment, consult with one or two additional specialists.
- Ask to speak with others who have undergone the procedure you are considering. These individuals can help you prepare for the days and weeks ahead.



WHAT IS VAIL HEALTH DOING TO MAKE SURGERY SAFER?

Vail Health appreciates that you've chosen our care team for your medical needs.

Our health care professionals demonstrate their commitment to quality and safety by providing excellent care and services that meet the highest standards. Vail Health has an impressively low infection rate. We incorporate the following steps and programs to ensure our patients' safety.

- **PROPER HAND HYGIENE:** We wash our hands according to the Centers for Disease Control guidelines, using soap and water or waterless alcohol hand sanitizer.
- **VERIFICATION:** We verify the correct procedure at every step in the surgical process—from scheduling to the operating room.
- **MARKING:** We mark the surgical site in the preoperative area.
- **INFECTION PREVENTION:** We use measures to prevent infection such as clippers in place of razors, preventative antibiotic treatment prior to surgery and keeping patients warm prior to surgery to prevent infection.
- **PATIENT INVOLVEMENT:** We involve patients in planning and treatment from admission to discharge.
- **RAPID RESPONSE TEAM:** We have a Rapid Response Team to bring critical care expertise to the patient bedside if needed. Families can activate the team by dialing 4444 on any hospital bedside telephone.
- **FALL REDUCTION:** Our Fall Reduction Program helps identify, prevent and educate patients and families at risk for falling.

Patient and Family Helpline

If you have questions or concerns related to your care or need help, please call our Patient & Family Help Line at (970) 477-5222. Please contact your surgeon if you have medical questions related to your surgery.



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