



Questions to Ask Your Surgeon or Physician When Preparing for a Procedure.

Surgery, whether minor or major, requires planning. It is important to have your doctor walk you through the full range of treatment options, along with their risks and benefits. Remember when asking questions and receiving information from your doctor, it is important to have a family member or friend accompany you to the doctor's office, to lend an extra ear. Otherwise, most of what you discuss will be forgotten. If you are alone, take notes, take your time, and make sure you fully understand the answers to your questions. Most important is your comfort level with your physician's recommendations and your decision upon entering surgery.

General questions to ask about surgery:

- What kind of surgery/procedure are you recommending?
- Why is this specific procedure my best option?
- Are there alternatives to this surgery?
- What are the risks of this surgery and how often do they occur?

Questions to ask your physician about his/her experience:

- How many times have you performed this procedure or operation (you want to make sure they do this type of surgery often)?
- Are you board certified in surgery (this means they have passed extra exams to perform surgical procedures)?

More specific questions:

- Does my insurance cover this procedure? *
- What kind of anesthesia will I be given or need?
- How long will the surgery take?
- Is this an inpatient or outpatient procedure? How long will I be in the hospital/facility for?
- What kind of post-operative care will I be given at the hospital/facility? Are there sufficient nurses on staff? (Good = One nurse for every two patients in the Intensive Care Unit. One nurse for every four patients on floor units.)
- How well did your other patients recover after they had this surgery?
- What should I expect during recovery? Will I have any limitations? How long will it be before I can go back to work or exercise again? Will I recover to 100%?

Once you have your questions answered:

- Make sure you have the time and date of surgery finalized and written down.
- If you need preauthorization from your insurance company, make sure everything is approved prior to surgery.
- Know when you need to arrive prior to surgery. This can help make pre-operative tasks run smoothly and on time, otherwise your procedure could be postponed to another day.
- Ask your surgeon if there is anything specific you need to do to prepare for surgery.
- Go over any medications you are currently taking with your physician/surgeon. Some medications may need to be stopped or reduced prior to surgery.

***NOTE: For information on how to financially prepare for surgery watch for an upcoming worksheet.**