

CHECKLIST As Surgery Nears

The Month Leading Up to the Procedure

Preparing the Patient's Body

- A nutritious **diet** can have positive effects on recovery from surgery. As the surgery date nears, the patient should eat healthy amounts of foods containing iron, calcium, and vitamins C and D. Such foods include dairy products and fresh, colorful fruits and vegetables. Protein also is important to the body's healing process. Good sources include meats, dairy, nuts and eggs.
- If **constipation** is a problem before surgery, ask the patient's primary health care provider to help develop a bowel management plan. (After surgery, pain medicines and/or decreased physical activity might cause constipation.)
- Leading up to surgery, patients should avoid drinking **alcohol** and exposure to **tobacco**.

Preoperative Appointments

- One to 30 days** before surgery, the patient's primary health care provider must perform a **preoperative physical examination**. The examination helps determine whether the patient is healthy enough to have the surgery. (If the examination occurs at a clinic that uses its own standard preoperative examination form, be sure to check the Health History and Physical Examination form from Gillette to see if the patient's surgeon has requested any lab tests.)
- Have **lab work** conducted, as requested by the patient's surgeon on the Health History and Physical Examination form. Some lab work might have to be done no more than **seven days** before surgery. If requested lab tests aren't completed, surgery might be **canceled**.
- Make sure the patient's primary health care provider:
 - **Completes** the Health History and Physical Examination form
 - **Faxes** the completed Health History and Physical Examination form and lab results to Gillette at **651-726-2643**
 - **Gives you copies** of the completed Health History and Physical Examination form and required lab results

Medicines and Supplements

- Several weeks before surgery, the patient might have to **stop or decrease** use of:
 - Anti-inflammatory medicines, such as aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve)
 - Blood-thinning medicines (such as Coumadin)
 - Valproic acid (Depakote)
 - Baclofen (Lioresal)
 - Vitamin, mineral, herbal or dietary supplements



Talk to the patient's primary health care provider about whether changing use of such medicines is appropriate. For more information, call a preoperative nurse at **651-229-3918**.

- Gather information about all medicines and vitamin, mineral, herbal or dietary supplements the patient takes. Include:
 - **Names** of the medicines and/or supplements
 - **Doses** taken
 - **Concentration** of those doses
 - **Times** of day the medicines and/or supplements are taken
 - **Methods** the patient uses to take the medicines and/or supplements (examples: swallows pills; inhales; applies to skin; receives through an IV tube)

We discuss this information with you during a preoperative phone call, about a week before surgery.



Communication With Gillette

- ❑ About a week before surgery, a **preoperative nurse calls** you to:
 - Confirm **when and where to arrive** for surgery
 - Review **health history**, including information about the patient's primary health care provider, pharmacy, and medicines (A Gillette pharmacist reviews the patient's list of medicines, so we know which ones the patient will need to take while at the hospital.)
 - Tell you **what to expect** on the day of surgery and during the hospital stay that follows, if one is required
 - Address your **questions and concerns**
 - Help you prepare for any **care** the patient will need after leaving Gillette
 - Tell you when the patient needs to **stop eating and drinking** before surgery

During the call, tell us if:

- The patient has ever had an infection related to methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (**MRSA**), vancomycin-resistant enterococci (**VRE**), or *Clostridium difficile* (**C. diff**)
 - Anyone in the patient's immediate family or household has (or recently had) a **contagious illness**, such as strep throat, chicken pox or influenza
 - The patient has an **implanted device**, such as an intrathecal baclofen pump, a shunt, a nerve stimulator, a pacemaker or implanted hearing aids
- ❑ If you have questions, concerns, or new information for us, call a preoperative nurse at **651-229-3918**.

Call **right away** if you have concerns about:

- Heart, bleeding or breathing issues
- Diabetes
- Seizures
- Ketogenic diet issues
- Other diet and feeding issues

Also call if:

- The patient develops a cold, cough, sore throat or fever
- The patient is exposed to chicken pox, measles, flu or any other contagious illness
- It's a few days before surgery and you haven't received a preoperative phone call from Gillette

CaringBridge Website

- ❑ You might want to set up a CaringBridge website to share information with family members and friends during the patient's hospital stay. CaringBridge is a free online resource that allows you to create a website and choose who can view it.

For more information, visit caringbridge.org. For help setting up a CaringBridge website, call a child life specialist at **651-229-3855**.