

Instructions for Patients Prior to Surgery

Before Surgery

Self-Isolate

Self-isolate for 14 days before the day of surgery (or as long as possible if less than 14 days before your surgery). This includes refraining from going for groceries. Public Health Ontario's "[How to Self-Isolate](#)" fact sheet provides more detailed information. Self-isolating is the best way to minimize the risk of getting or exposing others to COVID. As well, early data suggests if you develop COVID after surgery, the rates of complications and even death increase dramatically.

Wear a Mask

- Consider wearing a mask, even at home, when you are within six feet (or two metres) of anyone. The mask can be any mask you have access to, including one made of cloth
- Household contacts should also wear a mask whenever they are within six feet of you. This is especially important if people you live with work outside the home

Hygiene

- Clean your hands frequently for at least 15 seconds, and avoid touching your face
- Disinfect common touch surfaces regularly

Monitor Symptoms*

Self-monitor in the time leading up to your surgery and immediately notify your Surgeon if you or your household contacts develop any of the following symptoms, or are diagnosed with COVID-19:

- Contact with anyone with an acute respiratory illness or anyone who has travelled in the past 14 days
- Contact with anyone who has had COVID or was suspected to have COVID in the last 14 days
- Fever or chills
- New cough or worsening chronic cough
- New or worsening shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Decrease or loss of sense of taste or smell
- Headaches (new or unexplained)
- Unexplained fatigue or muscle aches
- Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
- Runny nose, or nasal congestion without other known cause
- If you are over 70 years of age: delirium, unexplained falls, acute functional decline, or worsening of a chronic disease

*Please note: these symptoms are current as of June 2020. Visit <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/> for any changes.

Pre-operative COVID Testing

If you need a pre-operative COVID test, it will be scheduled for you shortly before surgery at a COVID-19 Assessment Centre in Huntsville or Bracebridge.

Day Before Surgery

Hospital staff will phone you to screen you for symptoms of COVID-19. Please ensure you have provided your surgeon with the best contact number to reach you the day before your surgery.

Day of Surgery

- Call the hospital if you have developed any symptoms listed above while self-monitoring.
- Plan to have someone drop you off at the main entrance at the time you were told to arrive (not any earlier). Avoid using public transportation. Hospital staff will assist you to register and proceed to the pre-operative area.
- Upon entrance to the hospital, you will be screened at the door, asked to clean your hands, and required to wear a hospital-issued mask for the entirety of your visit at the hospital.
- We regret no visitors are permitted in the hospital, not even to accompany you on the day of surgery (exceptions may be made for certain circumstances). A support person with a working cell phone must be available to pick you up after surgery within 15 minutes of a call from hospital staff. This is important to helping us maintain physical distancing in hospital waiting areas.
- If you want a friend or family member to receive information on how to track the progress of your surgery, please bring with you written contact information.

Possibility of Cancellation

Your surgical team is doing everything possible to provide high-quality care within the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is always the possibility of unanticipated factors that may cause a procedure to be cancelled even up to and including the day of surgery.

Possibility of COVID-19 Exposure

Even people without symptoms can spread COVID-19 to others. This means that despite all efforts to ensure staff and patient safety (such as daily staff screening, testing of symptomatic staff, self-isolation of patients prior to admission wherever possible, etc.), there will always be a possibility of being exposed to COVID-19 in any public space, including our Hospital. Please consider this when determining if surgery is right for you at this time.

After Surgery

Prior to discharge, information about post-operative follow up will be provided to you.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

How to Self-Isolate

You must isolate yourself from others if you have COVID-19 symptoms or may have been exposed to COVID-19. If you start to feel worse, contact your health care provider or Telehealth (1-866-797-0000).

Stay home

- Do not use public transportation, taxis or rideshares.
- Do not go to work, school or other public places.



Avoid contact with others

- No visitors unless essential (e.g., care providers).
- Stay away from seniors and people with chronic medical conditions (e.g., diabetes, lung problems, immune deficiency).
- As much as possible, stay in a separate room from other people in your home and use a separate bathroom if you have one.
- Make sure that shared rooms have good airflow (e.g., open windows).
- If these steps are not possible, keep a distance of at least two metres from others at all times.



Keep your distance

- If you are in a room with other people, keep a distance of at least two metres and wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth.
- If you cannot wear a mask, people should wear a mask when they are in the same room as you.



Wash your hands

- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Dry your hands with a paper towel or with cloth towel that no one else will share.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.



Cover your coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hand.
- Throw used tissues in a lined wastebasket and wash your hands. Lining the wastebasket with a plastic bag makes waste disposal safer.
- Clean your hands after emptying the wastebasket.



Wear a mask over your nose and mouth

- Wear a mask if you must leave your house to see a health care provider.
- Wear a mask when you are within two metres of other people, or stay in a separate room.
- If you do not have a mask, maintain two meters distance from people and cover your cough and sneezes. See our [Physical Distancing](#) fact sheet.



What should I do if I develop symptoms?

- Complete the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#).
- Contact Telehealth (1-866-797-0000) or your health care provider.
- Anyone with whom you had close physical contact (e.g., in your household) in the two days before your symptoms started or after symptoms started should also self-isolate. If you have questions about this, call your [local public health unit](#). (1-877-721-7520)
- Isolate for 14 days beginning when your symptoms started.
- After 14 days, you can stop isolating if you no longer have a fever and your symptoms have improved, but you should continue with [physical distancing measures](#).
- If you are still unwell at 14 days, contact Telehealth or your health care provider.

Learn about the virus

COVID-19 is a new virus. It spreads by respiratory droplets of an infected person to others with whom they have close contact such as people who live in the same household or provide care.

You can also access up to date information on COVID-19 on the Ontario Ministry of Health's website: ontario.ca/coronavirus.

The information in this document is current as of April 10, 2020.

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