



# Pre-Surgical Instruction Booklet

A Guide to Surgery  
Preparation and  
Recovery



SKAGIT  
VALLEY  
HOSPITAL

# Pre-Surgical Patient Instructions

## Care Agreement:

- ... You have the right to help plan your care.
- ... To do this, you must learn about your health condition and how it may be treated.
- ... You can then discuss treatment options with your care team and work with them to clearly understand your goals and preferences.
- ... You always have the right to refuse treatment.
- ... Please help your care providers by providing accurate, up to date phone contact numbers, allergies, and medication lists.

## Pre-Surgical Procedure



### Registration

Most registration information is collected at the time your surgery is scheduled. On occasion, registration staff may contact you for additional information.

### Pre-operative Clinic Phone Call

You will be contacted by a **Pre-operative Clinic nurse** prior to the date of your surgery. Working closely with your doctor and the anesthesiologist, pre-operative nurses are trained to gather health information and review your

entire health picture. They are able to order additional tests as needed. They can advise you on which medications to take on the morning of your surgery.

**If you have not received a call (or been scheduled for a pre-op clinic visit), within three working days of your procedure** please call 360-814-8299 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. It is possible we do not have your latest contact information. It is not unusual to have to leave a message when you call the number since the pre-op nurses do most of their work on the phone. When leaving your contact information on the voice mail, please speak slowly and clearly. Leave your name, spelling the last name, your date of scheduled surgery, and your ten digit phone number or numbers.

In addition, it is important that we have an **accurate list of all the medications** you are currently taking, including dose and how often you take each medication. We also want to know which vitamins, minerals, etc you take.

### **The nurse will:**

- ... Review your health history, including your medications and any allergies. Have an accurate medication list ready for this call.
- ... Review specific instructions for what you need to do prior to your surgery.
- ... Provide you with the most up to date information regarding your times for arrival and surgery, as they work from the master surgical schedule.

## Common Pre-operative Medical Testing:

**EKG:** This test, also called an ECG, helps doctors see the health of your heart. Sticky pads are placed on your chest, arms, and legs. A short period of activity in your heart muscle is recorded. Your doctor will look closely for certain problems or changes in how your heart is working. This test takes about five to ten minutes.

**Blood tests:** You may need blood taken for tests. The blood can be taken from a blood vessel in your hand, arm, or the bend in your elbow. It can give your doctor more information about your health condition.



**Chest x-ray:** This is a picture of your lungs and heart. They can use the x-ray to look for signs of infection, like pneumonia, and to look at your heart.

## Planning Ahead for Going Home

### Identify a Care Partner

Before you come to the hospital, it is very important that you ask a close friend or family member to be your support person. This person should be able to:



- ... Drive you the to hospital.
- ... Wait with you before your surgery.
- ... Listen to your instructions for care after the surgery.
- ... Pick up any prescriptions that may be needed.
- ... Drive you home.

- ... Help you at home until you are able to be by yourself.
- ... Stay with you overnight to assist you.
- ... Scheduling follow-up appointments with your doctor.

**Set up help for yourself BEFORE your surgery.**

You will need help with everyday chores for a few weeks when you return home. Who will help you with:

- ... Meals \_\_\_\_\_
- ... Transportation \_\_\_\_\_
- ... Housework \_\_\_\_\_
- ... Grocery Shopping \_\_\_\_\_
- ... Mail \_\_\_\_\_
- ... Dressing \_\_\_\_\_
- ... Personal Hygiene \_\_\_\_\_
- ... Home Exercise \_\_\_\_\_
- ... Yard Work \_\_\_\_\_

**The Night Before Your Surgery/Procedure**

- ... You may have solid food up to 8 hours prior to arrival.
- ... You may have clear liquids up to 2 hours before arrival.
- ... Clear liquids include: water, clear juices, coffee & teas without creamers, and broth.
- ... Sometimes your surgeon may instruct you to be on a clear-liquid-only diet for 1-2 days before your surgery.

- ... Nothing by mouth within 2 hours of arrival at hospital!
- ... If you have a pacemaker or auto-defibrillator, please have your implant information card available.

### **Call your doctor if:**

- ... You have questions or concerns before your surgery/procedure.
- ... You have any signs and symptoms of a major cold.
- ... You have any other illnesses or health concerns.



## **Day of Your Surgery/Procedure**

### **Daily Medications**

- ... Take your morning pills as instructed by the pre-op nurse **with just a sip of water.**
- ... **Your doctor may give you special medicine instructions.**



### **Before leaving home, remember:**

- ... **Leave valuables at home**, including: cash, credit cards, checkbooks, jewelry, items of sentimental value, or valuable items (including valuable clothing).
- ... **All jewelry**, including body jewelry, must be removed before surgery. (This includes wedding bands)
- ... **Electronic devices**, such as Laptop computers, personal music and game players, and cellular phones should also be left at home, unless your care partner can accept responsibility for their safety.

***Skagit Valley Hospital is not responsible  
for lost items***

- ... Bring only enough money to cover any required insurance co-pays and/or discharge medications purchased through our out patient pharmacy.
- ... You may brush your teeth the day of your surgery, but do not swallow any water, toothpaste or mouthwash.
- ... Shower and wash and dry your hair before coming to the hospital. It could be a day or longer before you can do these things again. (If your hair is wet or damp, it is difficult to stay warm.)
- ... Do not use hair spray, perfume, or cologne.
- ... Nail polish use is discouraged.
- ... Do not wear make-up or mascara.
- ... Do not wear deodorant if you are having breast or shoulder surgery.
- ... Bring a case to safely store: eyeglasses, contact lenses, hearing aids and dentures (partials or retainers).
- ... Bring eye drops, respiratory inhalers (breathing treatments) or C-pap if you use them.
- ... All surgical rooms are private. This includes the rooms in the pre-operative area, procedure rooms, and hospital rooms. All rooms have television sets.
- ... You may bring reading materials.

If you are delayed for any reason on the day of surgery, call 360-814-2311.

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**Arrive at Skagit Valley Hospital:  
Be Prompt!**

On the day of surgery please arrive at the hospital at the appointed time before your surgery. It is possible that your procedure time may be moved due to unforeseen cancellations or emergencies. If it is necessary to move your procedure, we will notify you as soon as possible.



**Where to go?**

Entering on the north side of the building, take the North Lobby Elevators to the second floor and check in at the surgical reception desk to your left, or simply ask for assistance at the Volunteer Information Desk in the main lobby. You may drop off at the turn-around. Assistance is available at the volunteer just inside the lobby.

**Parking**

The closest parking available to patients and families coming for surgery is in the lot nearest to the front doors of the hospital's north (main) entrance.

**Please bring the following items with you to the hospital:**

**A list of all your medications** including herbal products, vitamins, food supplements and over the counter medicines. Include the following:

- ... medicine name, strength and how often you take it.
- If you do not have a complete list, bring the original bottles with you.

- ... All papers given to you by your doctor and the office staff.
- ... Insurance card (s); Money for co-pays.
- ... Clothes that will fit comfortably over your surgical area.
- ... Robe
- ... Loose fitting, elastic waist pants
- ... Shirt
- ... Underwear
- ... Socks
- ... Slip on shoes
- ... Pacemaker card (if you have one).
- ... Any Advanced Directives you have (i.e. Living Will, Durable Power of Attorney). If you do not have one and would like one, it is possible to complete one at the hospital when you arrive. We will provide free notary service for these documents.

## **Patient Safety**

While you are here, you will be asked questions such as:

- ... What is your name?
- ... What is your birth date?
- ... What surgery are you having done?
- ... Do you have any allergies?

Do not be alarmed by these questions. Each member of your care team must make sure they know the answer to each of these questions so we can provide the safest care to you.

- ... A nurse will insert an intravenous tube (IV) into your vein. A vein in the arm is usually chosen. Through the IV tube, you will be given fluids and medicines.
- ... An anesthesiologist will talk to you before your surgery. This doctor may give you medicine to make you sleepy before your procedure or surgery. Tell your nurse or doctor if you or anyone in your family has had a problem with anesthesia in the past.
- ... You will be asked to sign a legal piece of paper (consent form). It gives your doctor permission to do the procedure or surgery. It also explains the problems that may happen, and your choices. Be sure all your questions have been answered before you sign this form.

Nurses will ask you about open skin areas on your body, especially in the area of your surgical site. Please tell your nurse about any open sores, rashes, or current skin conditions you may have on the day of your surgery.

## **Surgical Site Marking**

Everyone will be asked to confirm what surgery or procedure he or she is having. Some surgical procedures require a mark at the site of surgery with initials. Marking the site is required for procedures involving right or left distinction.

## **Friends and Family:**

- ... Friends and family members are welcome to wait in our Day Surgery waiting room during your surgery. Space is limited.
- ... There is a “Smart Track” monitor in the waiting room that allows you to track the progress of patients throughout the surgical process. If you need directions to find this, just ask the receptionist.
- ... Skagit Valley Hospital is wireless internet-enabled campus-wide for those of you with Wifi-enabled laptop computers.
- ... You may use cellular phones within the hospital’s surgical waiting area, signal permitting. Phone landlines are available in each patient room. Some areas of the hospital may be designated as non-cellular phone use areas because of potential interference with sensitive medical equipment.
- ... Once your surgery is over, your doctor will meet with a designated family member or friend to update them on your condition.
- ... Your family members can visit you if you are staying overnight in the hospital. All patient rooms are private rooms to ensure privacy of your medical information. For your comfort and the comfort of other patients, we request you limit visitors to one or two at a time.
- ... Please bring quiet activities for children.
- ... An adult must accompany children at all times.

## **Tobacco Free**

Skagit Valley Hospital is a tobacco-free hospital. If you use tobacco, we will talk to you about the support we can give you. We have nicotine patches, gum and lozenges for breakthrough cravings. Your doctor can order these items for you.

### **For helpful information about quitting:**

Call toll-free 1-877-270-STOP

Or go to: [www.tobaccoquitline.com](http://www.tobaccoquitline.com).



The hospital also provides stop smoking packets. We encourage you to ask for one of these if you are a current smoker or have just recently quit. We want to support your efforts to improve your health.

## **After your surgery**

### **What to expect after your procedure:**



### **Pain Management: What Everyone Should Know...**

We want to make your stay as comfortable as possible. Both drugs and non-drug treatment can be helpful in preventing and controlling pain. Everyone's pain is different, so please let us know about any pain or discomfort you are experiencing.

## **The Pain Bill of Rights:**

You have the right to have your report of pain taken seriously and to be treated with dignity and respect by doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other healthcare

... You have the right to have your pain assessed and reassessed regularly and your treatment adjusted if your pain has not eased.

... You have the right to actively participate in decisions about how to manage your pain.

## **Pain medicine:**

You may be given medicine to take at home to take away or decrease pain. Your caregiver will tell you how much to take and how often to take it. Take the medicine exactly as directed by your doctor. Do not wait until the pain is too bad before taking your medicine. The medicine may not work as well at controlling your pain if you wait too long to take it. Tell caregivers if the pain medicine does not help, or if your pain comes back too soon.

## **Hints for success:**

... Taking the medicine regularly, as prescribed will usually give the most continuous pain relief.

... Take your medicine with food and water to avoid nausea.

... Increase foods naturally high in water and fiber to ease symptoms of constipation.

## **Post-operative pain treatment:**

**Rest:** You need extra rest to recover from the physical and emotional stress of your surgery to insure optimal healing.

**Ice:** Ice packs, both commercial and simple bags of ice are very helpful to reduce pain and swelling following surgery. Place a cloth against the skin area, or over the bandage to be iced. Apply ice continuously for 15-20 minutes, but never for greater than 30 minutes. You may repeat this process once your skin temperature has returned to normal. A loose cloth wrap can help to hold the ice bag in position. More frequent or longer periods of icing can cause frostbite. Icing may be helpful for the first two or three days after your surgery. Never place ice directly on the skin.

**Elevation:** Raising the affected body part at or above the level of the heart is ideal, but not always practical. Lying down will usually put you in the best position to raise your arm or legs. You may place pillows beneath your arm or leg to rest upon.

**Circulation:** Gentle exercises can help you prevent circulation problems. You may be asked to do ankle pumps. To do ankle pumps, bend your feet toward you (use your ankles to flex) and away from you (point your feet).

**Deep Breathing:** Deep breathing after surgery helps to expand your lungs and keep them clear. We will remind you to breathe deeply and often. This is very important for the prevention of postoperative complications. Your family members may help you remember to do this too.

## Wound Care:

- ... When you are allowed to shower, avoid direct spray of water to your incision.
- ... Do not scrub your incision, unless given instructions to do so.
- ... Gently pat yourself dry, put on a clean new bandage if directed to do so.
- ... Remove and change your bandages as soon as they get wet or dirty.



You will receive specific instructions when you are discharged from the hospital. Your instructions will contain information specific to your surgery and surgical wound care and bandaging.

**Leave the paper wound tapes (Steri-strips) in place** until told otherwise by your surgeon.

## Signs and symptoms of wound infection:

If you have a question or concern, first refer to the printed Postoperative Instructions sheet given to you at discharge from the hospital.

Call your doctor's office if any of the following should happen:

- ... Fever, higher than 100.5 degrees F.
- ... Redness, heat, or excessive swelling in the wound area.
- ... Bleeding or drainage from the wound.
- ... Generalized chills.

**Remember there is no such thing as a bad question!**

## **Recovery Area**

You may be taken to a recovery room until you are fully awake. Nurses will watch you closely for any problems.

Do **not** get out of bed until your nurse says it is OK. When your nurse determines that you are ready, you will be taken back to your hospital room. The bandages used to cover your stitches keep the area clean and dry to prevent infection. You will either return to the Day Surgery area for discharge, or be moved to your hospital room over night.

## **Going Home**

After your surgery you will be closely monitored. When you are ready to go home, a nurse will give you instructions about your home care and medications. You **must** have a responsible adult drive you home when you are discharged.



### **If you go home on the same day as your surgery:**

Expect a phone call from a nurse the day after your surgery (on Monday, if your surgery is on Friday). The nurse will ask you how you are doing. Please feel free to ask questions.

**Take your medicine as directed:** Always take your medicine as directed by doctor or pharmacist. Call your

doctor if you think your medicines are not helping or if you feel you are having side effects. Do not quit taking your medicines until you discuss it with your doctor. You may resume your usual medications when you go home.

**Antibiotics:** This medicine is given to fight or prevent an infection caused by bacteria. Always follow the instructions carefully.

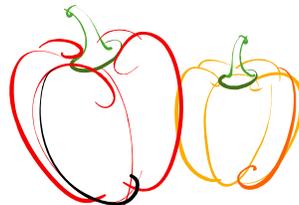
**Stool softeners:** Narcotic pain medicines commonly cause constipation. Talk with your surgeon before your surgery if you are prone to constipation. You may be given stool softeners to soften your bowel movements, making them easier to pass. Your pharmacist can also advise you of over-the-counter stool softeners, as an alternative.

### **Diet to promote recovery:**

Eat a variety of healthy foods from all the food groups every day.

Include:

- ... Grains...whole grain bread, cereal, rice and pasta.
- ... Fruits and vegetables... including dark green and orange vegetables and legumes (dry beans).
- ... Dairy products... such as low-fat milk, yogurt and cheese.
- ... Protein sources such as lean meat and poultry (chicken), fish, beans, eggs and nuts.



## **If you stay in the hospital overnight or longer:**

During your hospital stay, our Case Management staff will work with you, your family members and your nurse to develop a plan for when you go home. Our role is to make an assessment of how well you were functioning before you came to the hospital, and set up services and/or equipment you may need when you go home. If you have questions regarding possible discharge needs, call the Case Management department at 360 814-2379.

If transportation home or to another facility is needed, we will discuss available options with you. If a family member or friend is picking you up, please notify them that the discharge time is prior to or around 11 a.m.

## **Billing Questions**

### **Do you have questions about the cost of your hospital care?**



The total amount of charges for your hospital care depends upon the following factors:

- ... The type of services your doctor orders. This includes X-rays, CT scans, MRI scans, nuclear medicine tests, EKG, physical therapy, etc.
- ... The number of laboratory tests your doctor orders.
- ... Medications your doctor orders.
- ... How long you stay in the hospital.

The amount of your hospital bill depends on the how much the insurance company pays. The hospital will bill your insurance company (primary and supplemental). You will be responsible for any deductibles, insurance co-pays, or balance on your account that your insurance does not pay.

Depending on the services you received, you may receive several different bills. Skagit Valley Hospital will send you a bill for hospital services. You may receive a separate bill for professional interpretation by a radiologist, pathologist, cardiologist or another physician. If you required anesthesia, you will receive a separate bill for that service.

**If you have questions concerning your hospital charges, you may call 360-814-2287 during normal business hours, Monday through Friday.**

If you have specific questions regarding what your insurance will pay, please contact your insurance company's customer service department. Their telephone number is usually printed on the back of your insurance card.

Assistance with Medicare billing and insurance claims is provided through the Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisor (SHIBA) at Skagit Valley Hospital by calling 360-814-2345 to make an appointment at Skagit Valley Hospital.

## **Appendix:**

### **Skagit Valley Hospital's Vision**

Each of us will contribute to making Skagit Valley Hospital the best regional community hospital in the Northwest, dedicated to understanding and exceeding our patients' expectations.

### **Skagit Valley Hospital's Service Standards:**

Safety, Compassion, Presentation, Efficiency

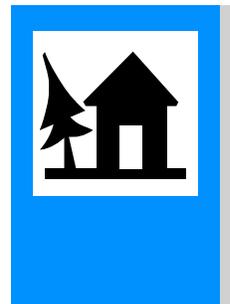
### **Your Privacy**

Skagit Valley Hospital keeps all patient information private, confidential and secure. Only the staff involved in your care, or for the billing process, will have the access to your information. All of your electronic information is kept secure throughout the hospital systems.

## **Additional Resources...**

### **Sunrise Inn**

The Sunrise Inn, located on the Skagit Valley Hospital campus, is a hospitality house that offers convenient, affordable lodging to family members of hospital patients. Space is limited so call in advance for scheduling.



For more information and reservations call 360-814-4111.

## Staying Healthy

### Hand washing is important at all times

When you are ill, undergoing treatment, or recovering from surgery, you can be at greater risk for infection. When you are a hospital patient, you may find it difficult to wash your hands as often as you would like. Caregivers at the hospital are available to help with hand washing or can provide hand wipes. If water is unavailable use waterless alcohol rinses or gels for hand washing. Products with alcohol are just as effective as washing your hands with traditional soap and water.



### How to Wash

- ... Have a paper towel ready to dry your hands.
- ... Wet your hands with warm water.
- ... Add soap to hands.
- ... Rub your hands together for 10-15 seconds.
- ... Rinse well with warm water.
- ... Pat your hands dry. If there is an air dryer, push the button with your elbow.
- ... Use a new paper towel to turn off the water faucet.



## **Skagit Valley Hospital phone contact list:**

Hospital Main Phone Number	360-424-4111
Registration	360-814-2496
Preoperative Nurse	360-814-8299
Day Surgery Check-in	360-814-2496
Case Management	360-814-2379
Statewide Health Insurance Benefit Advisor	360-814-2345
Billing	360-814-2287
Sunrise Inn	360-424-4111

For more information about the services offered at Skagit Valley Hospital please check our Web site at [www.skagitvalleyhospital.org](http://www.skagitvalleyhospital.org)

# Notes



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