

Getting ready for my operation



You will be undergoing surgery soon at the CHUM. This brochure explains how to prepare yourself before the day of surgery and what to expect when you arrive at the hospital.

Where and when will my operation be carried out?

Someone from the Reception Service will phone you to tell you the date and time when you need to come to the hospital. That person will also tell you where to go. Write down this information below, so that you will remember it.



APPOINTMENT

Date :

Time :

Location :

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Please note that the date and time of your operation will be confirmed only a few days prior to it, perhaps even just the day before. You should prepare a suitcase in advance with your personal items.

What should I do if I need to postpone my operation?

If you can't go to the hospital on the day of your operation, call the Reception Service of your appointed hospital as soon as possible:

- > Hôtel-Dieu: (514) 890-8144
- > Hôpital Notre-Dame: (514) 890-8244
- > Hôpital Saint-Luc: (514) 890-8344

What precautions should I take BEFORE my operation?

Follow your physician's orders regarding your medications.

Certain medications or natural health products should not be taken before an operation. Discuss this with your physician.

The week before your operation

Don't shave your skin in the region where the surgery will be done. Don't use shaving cream. This will lower the risk of infection and help with the healing of your wound. If shaving is needed, it will be done by hospital personnel.



24 hours before your operation

- Don't consume any alcohol.
- Don't smoke.

This will help reduce the risk of complications after your operation. In fact, it's best to stop smoking at least one month before the operation. To help you with this, your physician can prescribe nicotine patches or other medications. Don't hesitate to consult your physician about this.

The evening before your operation

Take a bath or shower and wash your hair. This will prepare your skin and prevent infections.

- Don't apply any perfume, cream, or lotion to your skin
- Remove any false nails and nail polish from your fingers and toes

As of midnight, the night before your operation

You'll need **to fast**, which means:

- don't eat or drink after midnight on the night before your operation, unless you have been advised otherwise by your care team
- don't swallow any water when brushing your teeth
- you may swallow a small amount of water if necessary to take medications authorized by your physician

What you should bring to the hospital:

- Health insurance card
- Documents related to any personal insurance
- Your medications and natural health products, in their original containers
- A list of your medications (you can get this from your pharmacist)

- Personal hygiene products and accessories (soap, shampoo, deodorant, hair brush or comb, toothpaste, toothbrush, dental floss, shaving kit)
- Facial tissues
- Sanitary napkins
- Comfortable slippers or shoes with no-skid soles
- Pyjamas, bathrobe
- Comfortable clothes and undergarments
- Eyeglasses, dentures, hearing aids and their cases or containers
- Walking aids (cane, crutches, or walker)
- Forms that the physician needs to complete (insurance, sick leave, medical certificate)
- Other personal effects:

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Bring only items that are strictly necessary!

Leave at home: jewellery, money, credit cards, and any other valuable items. The hospital is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

What should I expect when I get to the hospital?

Members of the care team will be there to welcome you. Note that you could be asked to come to the hospital not on the day of your operation, but one or more days beforehand.

These are the usual steps. They could vary, depending on your situation.

1 Respond to questions from the nurse

The nurse will ask about your health status. If you have a cough or fever, allergies, or any other health problem, tell the nurse. Take this opportunity to talk about your concerns and ask any questions.



2 Undergo some medical exams

You may have to undergo some medical exams, such as blood tests, urinalysis, x-ray, or an echocardiogram (a test that measures heart activity). Women under 50 years old may be asked to take a pregnancy test.

3 Undergo an enema (to clear the intestines)

If you require an enema, the nurse will tell you what to do.

4 Have an intravenous solution or serum inserted

An intravenous solution or serum may be started by inserting a needle into one of your veins, either the evening before or the morning of your operation. This liquid will provide your body with the water that you're not allowed to drink, sending it directly through a vein (intravenous drip). If needed, medications can be given to you in the same way.

5 Sign a consent form

If this hasn't already been done, you will be asked to sign a form to authorize the surgeon to operate and the anaesthetist to administer anaesthesia (either to "put you to sleep" completely or to "freeze" a portion of your body).

Before signing the form, be sure you have a good understanding of your operation and the possible complications. Don't hesitate to ask questions.

6 Receive information on any exercises and special care to be taken after the operation

For example, the nurse will explain:

- how to do deep breathing and coughing exercises
- how to get up for the first time after the operation and how to do physical exercises
- how to manage your pain

Worried about having an operation?

It's normal to feel stressed or anxious before an operation.

Here are some things that may help calm you:

- take deep breaths
- lie down in a dim room with the lights out
- listen to music that you enjoy
- watch a television program, read
- talk about your worries, talking can sometimes help
- imagine something enjoyable
- think positive thoughts ("everything will turn out fine")
- ask to meet with a spiritual care advisor

If your worries keep you from sleeping, tell a member of the personnel. It may be possible to prescribe a sleep medication for you.



USEFUL RESOURCES

Other health sheets published by the CHUM are available. Ask for those that might fit your situation.



You can also find them on our web site chumontreal.qc.ca/votresante

The content of this document in no way replaces the recommendations and diagnoses made, or the treatment suggested by your health professional.

To find out more about the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal chumontreal.qc.ca



Questions

Write down any questions you want to ask your care team so you don't forget anything.



Handwritten notes area for questions



Observations - Comments

Write down observations you feel are important : your symptoms, treatments, follow-up, energy level, spirit, etc.



Handwritten notes area for observations and comments



Upcoming appointments

Handwritten notes area for upcoming appointments

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