

What to Expect

Surgery involves preparation to ensure your recovery is a positive experience and leads to a better quality of life. You should expect post-operative pain, which can vary for each patient in terms of intensity of pain and length of pain post-surgery. You may feel sad, depressed, and/or fatigued while recovering from surgery. You may also have difficulty sleeping for a couple months following surgery. **Our goal at Flagstaff Bone and Joint is to help you have the best possible experience and result.** We have prepared this document for you to read and review to gain a better understanding of what to expect and how to prepare for surgery. Your commitment, involvement, and dedication will be vital to a successful outcome from your surgery.

Risks of Surgery

There are risks associated with surgery including, but not limited to: infection, blood clots, anesthesia-related complications, or other severe complications which could result in death. Your surgical team may prescribe antibiotics or a blood thinner, and/or may advise on other specific instructions to reduce risks after surgery. Your surgical team will also review your medical history to reduce these risks. If you have any questions or concerns, please address them with your surgeon and/or anesthesiologist.

Support System

Arrange for a **responsible adult to assist you through recovery.** Choose someone who can attend pre-surgical visits, take you home after surgery, and help you once you've returned home. Share the information in this document with anyone who will be supporting you through this process.

Preparing the Home

- Ensure you have a sufficient supply of your prescription medications available.
- Prepare meals ahead of time.
- Arrange for pet care or childcare if needed.
- Remove rugs, electrical cords, or other trip hazards throughout the house.
- Set up a comfortable rest area with tissues, remote control, phone, TV, etc. nearby.
- Ensure you have an armchair with a firm cushion you can sit on.
- Have a flat, firm mattress with fresh linens. Waterbeds are not recommended post-surgery.
- Place nightlights in bathrooms and dark areas of the home.
- Put non-skid surfaces such as bathmats in your tubs and showers.
- If you are by yourself for part of the day, have a **portable phone** and/or personal alarm with you to call for help in case of an emergency.
- If having surgery on your hip, knee, leg, ankle, or foot, consider purchasing a bigger shoe and non-slip socks or slippers to accommodate swelling into foot and ankle.

Scheduling

Our surgery scheduling team will check eligibility and authorization with your insurance company and contact you to schedule you for surgery. They will also schedule you for your post-operative appointments after surgery. Please ensure you have up to date contact information in your chart so we can reach you effectively.

Medical History

It is important to share your up-to-date medical information with your surgeon. You will be asked to confirm what medications you are taking and if you have any health-related problems.

You may be asked the following:

- Do you have any health problems such as:
 - Diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure (hypertension)
 - Current dental (teeth/mouth) infections
 - History of pulmonary (lung) disease
 - History of a deep vein thrombosis (blood clot) or pulmonary embolism (blood clot in lung)
 - Bleeding disorders and/or taking anti-coagulant medication (Coumadin, Eliquis, etc.)
 - Kidney disorder or Autoimmune disorder

Medications

Please **inform our office of all medications you are taking**. Certain prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, herbal supplements, and vitamins can interfere with healing after an operation and need to be adjusted or held for a period of time. A big concern is medications/supplements that increase bleeding at the surgical site as excess blood under the incision results in poor wound healing, excess pain, increased scarring, and a higher risk for infection. Some medications/supplements slow the healing process of bone and others can interfere with the anesthesia drugs that keep you asleep during an operation. It is important to ensure that these medications/supplements are out of your system prior to your surgery. **Refer to list on Pages 4-5 for medications of concern and timelines.**

Medical Clearance

After reviewing your medical history, your surgeon may inform you that you're required to obtain medical clearance prior to undergoing surgery. **If clearance is required**, we will fax requests to the appropriate physician (your cardiologist, nephrologist, rheumatologist, pulmonologist, etc.) to arrange for surgical clearance. **You will not be scheduled for surgery until all clearances are received.** Please let your surgical team at Flagstaff Bone and Joint know when you have been scheduled for clearance. Medical clearance results should be faxed to (928) 773-2281.

Pre-Surgery Timeline

Below is **how to prepare** during the weeks and days before surgery.

1 Month Before Surgery:

- Confirm your home is prepared and safe for you to return to after surgery.
- Ensure you have transportation to and from surgery and post-operative visits.
- Schedule post-operative physical therapy appointments (if required).
- Ensure you understand how to perform any prescribed home exercises (if applicable).
- Continue any exercises or other allowed activity to build strength and stamina prior to surgery.
- STOP SMOKING (if you haven't already).
- **If you live out of town**, it is recommended to stay in Flagstaff (or nearby) the night before your surgery.
- Your **post-surgery medications** will be sent to your pharmacy either **3-weeks** before surgery (if you are having a joint replacement or spine surgery) **or 3-business days** before surgery (for all other surgeries). Let your surgical team know if you'd like your post-surgery prescriptions sent to a different pharmacy than you currently have on file.

2 Days Before Surgery:

Gather everything you need to bring with you to the surgery center:

- Extra pair of loose pants or shorts
- Cases for contact lenses, glasses, or dentures
- Photo ID and Insurance Card
- Tote bag for all your belongings

1 Day Before Surgery:

- Eat a “regular” portion-sized dinner the day prior to your surgery; do not eat large-quantity meals.
- **Do NOT eat or drink after midnight.** This includes mints, gum, or water. Your surgery may be cancelled or delayed if you eat or drink after midnight the night before surgery.
- Take all routine medications except those you’ve been advised to STOP before surgery. If there is any question about which medications to take, please check with our office at (928) 773-2280.

Day of Surgery:

- Take a shower using antibacterial soap (e.g., Dial® soap, or other prescribed soap by your physician) the day of surgery. This will reduce your risk of a surgical wound infection.
- Wear freshly washed, comfortable, and loose-fitting clothing.
- Do NOT apply lotions, perfume, talcums, nail polish, or make-up.
- Do NOT have anything to eat or drink, including mints, gum, or water.
 - You may take any heart or blood pressure medications with a small sip of water.
 - Do not take insulin or diabetes medications unless otherwise instructed.
- You must **show up a few hours prior to surgery**, refer to the time given to you by the surgical facility.
- Bring your Photo-ID, Insurance Card, cases for dentures, contacts, glasses, extra pair of loose shorts/pants, non-slip shoes/slippers, and tote bag for your belongings.
- **A responsible adult must accompany you to the surgery center.**
- Plan to have someone drive you home and stay with you the first night (for at least 24 hours).
 - If you have surgery at **Flagstaff Medical Center (FMC)**, or at the **Arizona Specialty Hospital** (in Phoenix), you might be admitted as inpatient to stay overnight (or to stay a few nights). Speak with your surgeon about your plan.

After Surgery

After the surgery is completed, the anesthesiologist will gradually bring you out of sedation. You will be transferred to a recovery room, where you will wake up. You will then be monitored in the recovery area for a few hours. The nurses will monitor your vital signs and keep you comfortable. They will administer any medications necessary for your post-operative pain and/or nausea. The medications administered at the surgery center and/or the nerve block (if applicable) should provide excellent pain relief. You will be discharged home once we are sure you are stable and comfortable.

For 24 hours after anesthesia, and while taking narcotic pain medication (opioids), you are deemed to be under the influence of drugs: do NOT drive, run machinery, drink alcohol, smoke, or make final decisions during this time.

The surgery facility team will ensure you will be discharged with any required post-surgery medical equipment such as a walker, crutches, boot, sling, etc.

Specific Surgery Instructions

Prior to (and after) your surgery, your surgical team will provide you a separate document with education and instructions specific to your surgery (to be provided either via printout or sent to your patient portal). This surgical education document will outline what you should expect post-surgery (including any mandatory activity restrictions), instruct you on home exercises as applicable, and inform you of pertinent recovery timelines related to your surgery. **Please reach out to your surgical team if you have not received your specific surgery instructions.**

Medications & Supplements: Pre-Surgery Instructions

Anti-Inflammatories (NSAIDs), Motrin / Ibuprofen / Aleve / Advil: Stop 1-week prior to surgery. These medications affect bleeding and may delay the healing of bone. Avoid taking these medications long-term after bone surgeries. Other procedures may allow you to restart one day after surgery. It is okay to take Acetaminophen (Tylenol) prior to surgery.

Aspirin: Stop 1-week prior to surgery and restart the day after surgery. This over-the-counter medication promotes bleeding. It is okay to take Acetaminophen (Tylenol) prior to surgery.

Coumadin: If you are having a joint replacement or spinal surgery, stop Coumadin 5-days prior to surgery. For other surgeries, your Primary Care Provider (or prescribing provider) will manage your Coumadin, both before and after surgery. Coumadin may result in excessive bleeding.

Diet Pill: Stop any prescribed diet pills or diet injections 2-weeks prior to surgery (e.g. Mounjaro, Wegovy, Rybelsus). See page 5 for specific instructions regarding Ozempic.

Echinacea: Stop taking Echinacea 2-weeks prior to surgery. This medication can be associated with allergic reactions and suppression of your immune system.

Enbrel: Stop 2-weeks prior to surgery and restart two weeks after surgery. This medication can affect soft tissue healing and increases the risk of infection.

Eliquis/Xarelto: If you are having a joint replacement or spine surgery, stop taking 72-hours (3 days) prior to surgery. Consult with your surgical team and prescribing provider regarding when to resume taking after surgery.

Ephedra (ma huang): Stop at least 1-day prior to surgery and may restart one day after surgery. Ephedra may increase the risk of heart attack and stroke. This medication can also increase bleeding at the surgical site.

Garlic Supplement: Stop at least 1-week prior to surgery and may restart one day after. Garlic may increase bleeding at the surgical site.

Ginkgo: Stop 36-hours before surgery (may restart the day after surgery). Ginkgo may increase bleeding at the surgical site.

Ginseng: Stop at least 1-week prior to surgery and may restart one day after surgery. Ginseng lowers blood sugar and may increase bleeding at the surgical site.

Hormone Replacement Therapy: If having a joint replacement or spine surgery, stop 7-days prior to surgery.

Humira: Stop 4-weeks before surgery. Please ask your surgeon about restarting this medication when you are being seen in the office for wound checks. This medication can affect soft tissue healing and increases the risk of infection.

Kava: Stop at least 1-day prior to surgery and may restart one day after surgery. Kava may increase the sedative effect of anesthetics that are given during the operation. Kava can also increase bleeding at the surgical site.

Methotrexate: If having a joint replacement or spine surgery, stop 2-weeks prior to surgery. For other surgeries, stop **one dose** prior to surgery. This medication will be restarted when the wound appears to be healing well. Ask your surgeon about restarting this medication when you are being seen in the office for wound checks.

Other Supplements: Omega-3, Flax, Fish oil, Glucosamine and Chondroitin, Multi-Vitamins, Vitamin E: Stop 2-weeks prior to surgery (may restart one day after). These supplements can increase bleeding at the surgical site.

Medications & Supplements: Pre-Surgery Instructions (continued)

Ozempic: If taking weekly, stop 1-week prior to surgery. If taking daily, stop one day before surgery. Ozempic may increase the risk of food regurgitation while on anesthesia.

Plaquenil: Does not need to be stopped prior to surgery. There is no increased risk of infection.

Plavix: Your Primary Care Provider will advise how to manage Plavix before and after your surgery. Plavix may cause excessive bleeding at the surgical site.

Remicade: Stop 2-3 months before surgery. Please ask your surgeon about restarting this medication when you are being seen in the office for wound checks. This medication can affect soft tissue healing and increases the risk of infection.

St. John's wort: Stop 2-weeks before surgery and may restart one day after surgery. St. John's wort may diminish the effects of several drugs that are given during the surgery.

Valerian: May increase the sedative effect of anesthetics given during the operation. A slow steady decrease in your daily dose over a few weeks before surgery will decrease the chance of withdrawal symptoms.