

BEFORE YOUR HOSPITAL STAY

Before Surgery: 1 to 4 Weeks

Surgery pre-registration

Pre-registering by phone will make your check-in on the day of surgery easier. Please call 312.926.4566 (TTY: 711) and have the following information available:

- Contact information (name, address and phone number)
- Social Security number
- Health insurance information

Please register at least 2 business days before your surgery.

Canceling surgery

Please call your surgeon's office as soon as possible if you get sick, become pregnant or need to reschedule your surgery for any reason.

Pre-operative clinic assessment visit

You must have an assessment at the Northwestern Medicine Pre-operative Clinic (Pre-op Clinic) before your surgery. Your surgeon's office may help schedule this appointment. We prefer this occur in person, but we can arrange a telehealth visit if needed. Please let your care team know if you need a telehealth appointment. They may also try to coordinate it with any additional testing you need. The assessment will be 7 to 30 days before your surgery.

The Pre-op Clinic is open Monday through Friday, 7 am to 5 pm.

It is located at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in the:

Lavin Family Pavilion, 17th Floor
259 East Erie Street | Chicago, Illinois 60611

You do not need to fast before this appointment. Plan to arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled time.

Please bring:

All of your current medications, either in the original bottles or on a written list with dosages and timing

A list of your physicians with their phone numbers

Your completed patient history form

This brochure and questions you may have

The Pre-op Clinic healthcare provider will talk to you about your health history and the type of anesthesia that is right for you. Your visit will take about 1 to 2 hours depending on the testing you need.

The Pre-op Clinic healthcare provider will give you written instructions for taking or stopping medications before surgery.

If you have any questions, you may call the Pre-op Clinic at 312.926.4343. For more information, go to nm.org > Patients and Visitors > I Am Having Surgery. You may also watch the video "Preventing Complications After Surgery" on this site.

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Preparing yourself for surgery

Be physically active before surgery

Studies show that patients who are active, even if it is just for a few weeks before surgery, can recover quicker and may have a lower risk of complications after surgery. Ask your physician which exercises are right for you.

Aerobic activity:

Walking

Biking on a level ground

Low-impact sports

Ballroom dancing

Water aerobics

Muscle-strengthening exercises:

Choose exercises that target the major muscle groups in your body:

- | | |
|---------|-------------|
| • Legs | • Stomach |
| • Back | • Shoulders |
| • Chest | • Hips |
| • Arms | |

Examples of muscle-strengthening exercises include:

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| • Lifting weights, such as bicep curls and shoulder presses | • Walking uphill |
| • Using resistance bands | • Push-ups and pull-ups |
| • Climbing stairs | • Sit-ups |
| | • Squats |
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Helpful tips

- You can exercise at home, at the gym or even outside, as weather permits.
- Warm up and cool down. Start and end each session by walking slowly for 5 minutes. This helps your muscles, joints and heart prepare for exercise. It also helps prevent soreness after.
- Wear comfortable shoes that fit well and are appropriate for exercise. Shock-absorbent and skid-proof shoes, such as sneakers, are best.
- As you become stronger, try adding more intensity to your muscle-strengthening exercises. Aim for 2 sets of 8 to 12 repetitions of each exercise per session.

It is OK to start small. Do what you can. You will get health benefits from even 5 minutes of physical activity each day.

Mentally prepare for surgery

It is important to prepare yourself mentally and emotionally for your surgery. As your surgery date approaches, you may feel anxious, overwhelmed or scared. If you are very anxious before your surgery, it may affect your recovery. It may lead to slower wound healing, increased pain, a longer hospital stay and a decreased ability to function.

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Studies show that using guided imagery techniques to reduce your anxiety before surgery may improve your outcomes.

This includes:

An improved quality of life

Less pain

A quicker return to your normal activities

Use guided imagery

Guided imagery is a safe, convenient and simple meditation technique. It aims to reduce the physical and emotional effects of anxiety. It involves all of your senses as you imagine a relaxing scene or series of experiences. Audio recordings guide you in creating these positive mental images. This influences how you feel and helps you relax.

Guided imagery may help reduce your anxiety as you wait for your surgery date. It may also help reduce pain and anxiety if you have ongoing health issues.

Guided imagery audio recordings are available on specific topics including:

Preparing for surgery

Easing pain

Promoting general wellness and better sleep

Smoking cessation

Go to healthjourneys.com/northwestern to access each audio recording. Listen before and after surgery to get the most benefits.

If you have any questions, please ask a member of your healthcare team.

Stop smoking

Quitting tobacco can improve your health. Your surgical wound will heal faster and be less likely to get infected if you do not smoke at least 4 weeks before surgery and up to 8 weeks after surgery. You will benefit the most by stopping smoking before your surgery. It is never too late to stop. The earlier you quit, the better off you will be.

Every day that you do not smoke or use nicotine products through smoking, vaping and chewing tobacco improves your chances for recovery.

Talk with your surgeon, surgical nurse practitioner, primary care physician or pre-operative clinic nurse to learn more about quitting tobacco use. We have a variety of medical and counseling services to help you quit.

Avoid alcohol and marijuana

Do not drink alcohol or use marijuana-based products for 24 hours before your surgery. Alcohol or marijuana can cause a bad reaction with the medication you will receive in the hospital. Please tell us if you need help decreasing your alcohol or marijuana use before surgery. Please let us know if you have ever gotten shaky or had a seizure if you do not drink alcohol.

Discuss illegal drugs with your healthcare team

If you use illegal drugs, please speak privately with your surgeon, surgical advanced practice provider, surgical physician assistant, primary care physician or pre-operative clinic nurse. Any conversation about illegal drug use is confidential and will remain private. We are dedicated to supporting your health and wellness. Illegal drugs can lead to dangerous problems around the time of surgery. We need to know what medications and drugs you use so that we can care for you.

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Choose a family spokesperson

Please ask 1 person to be a spokesperson. They will be the person who can update family members and friends about your condition after surgery. We cannot share any medical information about you by phone to outside callers. Please give the name of your spokesperson to your nurse when you check in on the day of your surgery.

Arrange for help for when you return home

Each person recovers from surgery differently. It is hard to predict how much help you will need. We encourage patients to keep a light schedule for 1 month after surgery. When you go home, you should be able to do light-duty tasks like walking upstairs, bathing and eating.

To better prepare, make a plan with your loved ones so you will have the help you need with:

Preparing meals, and stocking your fridge and freezer with food that is easy to reheat

Driving to appointments

Bathing and personal care

Household chores such as cleaning and laundry

Child or pet care

Start to gather items your loved ones will need to support you during your recovery. If you have any concerns about care at home, let your healthcare team know.

Arrange transportation

Arrange for a ride home from the hospital. After your surgery, you may not be allowed to drive until your surgeon tells you that you can. You cannot drive while you are taking narcotic medication for pain. Let your nurse know if you have any concerns about going home.

Complications after surgery are rare, but they can happen. For that reason, we do not advise international and other long-distance travel for the first 4 weeks after surgery. If you are traveling a long way to the hospital for your surgery, talk to your surgeon about travel arrangements for after surgery.

Plan time off from work

Ask for leave from work for 6 to 8 weeks. Your employer may request that your surgeon's office complete paperwork for insurance, short-term disability and Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Please give any forms to your surgeon's office at least 2 to 3 weeks before your surgery. It may take up to 5 business days for them to complete your paperwork.

Before surgery: 7 days

Follow a healthy meal plan.

Stop taking the following medications until after surgery unless your physician tells you otherwise:

7 days before surgery

- ☐ Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen (Motrin®) and naproxen (Aleve®)
- ☐ Prasugrel (Effient®)
- ☐ Supplements such as fish oil, garlic, ginkgo biloba and ginseng

5 days before surgery

- ☐ Ticagrelor (Brilinta®, Brilique®)
- ☐ Clopidogrel (Plavix®)
- ☐ Warfarin (Coumadin®)

3 days before surgery

- ☐ Rivaroxaban (Xarelto®)
- ☐ Dabigatran (Pradaxa®)
- ☐ Apixaban (Eliquis®)

Day of surgery

- ☐ ACE (angiotensin-converting enzyme) inhibitors (benazepril, captopril, enalapril, fosinopril, lisinopril, moexipril, quinapril, ramipril, spirapril, trandolapril)
- ☐ ARB (angiotensin receptor blocker) medications (candesartan, irbesartan, losartan, olmesartan, telmisartan, valsartan)

If you have a history of bleeding problems or blood clots, tell your healthcare team right away. You should continue to take aspirin as prescribed including the day of surgery. However, your healthcare team may tell you to stop taking other blood thinner medications for several days before surgery.

Tell your healthcare team if you take any of the following medications:

Warfarin (Coumadin)

Clopidogrel (Plavix)

Ticagrelor (Brillinta, Brilique)

Heparin

Rivaroxaban (Xarelto)

Dabigatran (Pradaxa)

Apixaban (Eliquis)

Edoxaban (Savaysa®)

Betrixaban (Bevyxxa®)

Pack your bag

Gather the following items to bring to the hospital:

This Vascular Surgery Enhanced Recovery Pathway Guide

Your photo ID

Health insurance information and card

Medicare card (for Medicare patients)

List of allergies

List of all of your current medications (prescription, over-the-counter and supplements)

Copies of advance directive, living will or power of attorney

Name of your chosen spokesperson

Bring the following items to have after surgery:

Glasses, contact lenses, hearing aids, dentures and their storage containers, labeled with your name

Cane, crutches or walker as needed, labeled with your name

All of your continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) equipment if you have sleep apnea (mask and machine)

Magazines, books or other reading materials, if you wish

Loose comfortable clothing to wear home when you are discharged

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Before surgery: 2 days

Preventing infection

It is important to follow the instructions for chlorhexidine washing at home before surgery. This can help prevent infections. You will use the chlorhexidine soap prescribed by your surgeon 2 times before surgery – once the day before and once the day of surgery. Use the entire bottle of chlorhexidine soap each time.

- Take a shower at bedtime, and use 1 entire bottle of chlorhexidine soap as follows:

Step 1: Wash your face and hair with regular soap and shampoo, and fully rinse clean.

Step 2: Use chlorhexidine soap to scrub your body from the neck down, including your belly button.

Step 3: Let the chlorhexidine soap suds soak on your skin. Wait 1 minute before rinsing it off.

Do not use the chlorhexidine soap on your head.

Do not shave the area that will be affected by surgery. Your surgical team will clip any hair around your surgical site that needs to be removed.

Do not apply body lotions or hair conditioners after showering.

Before surgery: 1 day

Phone call from your surgeon's office

The day before your surgery (or on Friday if your surgery is on Monday), you will receive a call from your surgeon's clinic. They will remind you about all of the steps you need to take before surgery. They will tell you when and where to arrive. They will also tell you the estimated time that your surgery will start. Please be aware that surgery times may change due to unforeseen events. We will let you know about any changes as soon as they occur.

Note that your surgeon's office may come up as an unlisted phone number. Please be sure to answer your phone around this time.

Follow this plan for taking medication, eating and drinking

If you have diabetes, follow your physician's instructions about taking insulin.

Continue taking other medications as directed by your surgeon.

Have a meal 8 hours before your arrival time. Do not eat any solid foods, milk or dairy products, including coffee creamer, after that time.

Drink plenty of water and other clear liquids throughout the day and up to 2 hours before your arrival time (see further instructions below in day of surgery).

Do not drink any alcohol or use marijuana-based products for at least 24 hours before your surgery.

The evening before your surgery

Take a shower at bedtime, and use 1 entire bottle of chlorhexidine soap. Do not use the chlorhexidine soap on your head.

Do not shave the area that will be affected by surgery.

Do not apply body lotions or hair conditioners after your shower.

Wear clean clothes to bed.

Sleep on clean sheets.

It is very important to follow these instructions to prevent infection.



Day of surgery

The morning of surgery

- Shower using 1 entire bottle of chlorhexidine soap, avoiding your face and head.
- Do not wear lotion, perfume, makeup, nail polish, jewelry or piercings.
- Do not shave the area that will be affected by surgery.
- Put on clean clothes.

2 hours before your scheduled surgery time:

- Drink a 10-ounce bottle of Ensure® Pre-Surgery clear carbohydrate drink. Take the medications your surgeon told you to take with small sips of water. If you cannot find Ensure Pre-Surgery, talk to your surgical team about a substitute drink (such as sports drinks containing 50 grams of carbohydrates that is not red or purple).
- **Do not eat, drink or put anything in your mouth after this time.**
- Do not use gum or cough drops.

Bring only the items you need. Please leave all valuables (jewelry, credit cards and money) at home. This includes body-piercing jewelry and tongue studs. You may not wear any jewelry during surgery.

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During your hospital stay

Parking (see Locations and Where to go sheet)

Surgery is done in 1 of 4 operating room locations at Northwestern Memorial Hospital. Although the operating rooms are in different buildings, all buildings at Northwestern Memorial Hospital are connected by walking bridges.

Depending on the location you are assigned to, you may choose one of the following parking options:

Parking Lot A at 222 East Huron Street, across from Galter and Feinberg pavilions, or at 223 East Superior Street, across from Northwestern Medicine Prentice Women's Hospital. This lot is recommended for patients having surgery at Olson, Prentice or Same-Day Surgery and for all patients who have a planned hospital admission after their surgery.

Parking Lot B located within Lavin Family Pavilion at 259 East Erie Street. Valet and self-parking are accessible from the driveways on both Erie and Ontario streets. This lot is recommended for patients having same-day surgery at 259 East Erie Street.

Parking Lots C and D - Erie/Ontario at 321 East Ontario Street between Erie and Ontario streets. A second-floor bridge connects it to 259 East Erie Street.

Valet parking is available at Lavin Family Pavilion (259 East Erie Street) and at Prentice Women's Hospital (250 East Superior Street).

Please bring your parking ticket in with you to have it validated. You can have your ticket validated at the Customer Services Desks on the 1st and 2nd floors of Feinberg and Galter pavilions, and on the 1st floor of Prentice Women's Hospital.

Current parking costs (subject to change):

- \$12 for fewer than 7 hours
- \$26 for 7 to 24 hours

Admitting area

Check in at your assigned Registration Desk at your assigned time unless you are told otherwise. The admitting clerk will ask you to sign an admission form.

Galter Pavilion
201 East Huron Street
5th Floor Registration

Pre-operative area

A member of our team will take you to the pre-operative area. They will complete a final checklist with you. They will ask you to change into a hospital gown. You may get a small injection of a blood thinner to prevent blood clots. They will insert an IV (into the vein) line into your hand or arm so that you can receive fluid and medicine during the surgery. You will meet your anesthesiologist (the physician who will provide your anesthesia) and other members of your surgical team. They will answer any questions and ask you to sign consent forms.

During your surgery

You will be asleep during your surgery. Your healthcare team will monitor you. Every vascular surgery is different, but on average, the length of the operation is 3 to 6 hours.

Family and friends

Depending on the current visitor policy, family or friends might be able to wait during your procedure in the 5th floor surgical waiting area. We ask that visitors silence their electronic devices for the comfort of all visitors in the waiting area. Your family or friends can track the status of your surgery on a video screen in the waiting area or they can choose to receive text message updates. Volunteers at the desk will also be able to provide updates.

Those under the age of 16 should not be left alone in the waiting room. A responsible adult must supervise them.

Please check nm.org/visitors for details about the current visitor policy.

Other resources

Food options are available throughout the hospital and on the 2nd floor of Feinberg, Galter, Lavin Family pavilions and Prentice Women's Hospital.

Bank machines are available on the 2nd floor of Galter and Feinberg pavilions.