

MAKING YOUR SURGERY SAFER – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

SURGICAL SAFETY CHECKS

Just as you want the best outcome from your upcoming surgery, so too, does every member of your surgical team. The **Surgical Safety Checklist** was created to make sure you are as safe as possible. Developed by the World Health Organization, and adapted by the Canadian Patient Safety Institute, the Checklist is quickly spreading across the country preventing hundreds of potential mistakes every year.

WHAT IS THE SURGICAL SAFETY CHECKLIST?

The checklist is a series of questions (in the form of a checklist) that the surgical team will go through at 3 distinct times: before anesthesia, before incision and before the patient leaves the operating room. In addition to making sure the standard steps are followed, the Checklist also encourages better communication between the team members, which has been shown to improve patient safety.

WHY DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE SURGICAL SAFETY CHECKLIST?

The checklist is used to make surgery safer. Knowing about the Checklist before your surgery will make you feel more comfortable when the surgical team discusses it in the operating room before you are given the anesthetic. You will know that their goal is to make sure that you are having the right procedure and that everything they need or may need is available.

HOW DO I KNOW IF THE SURGICAL SAFETY CHECKLIST WILL BE USED FOR MY SURGERY?

Simply ask any member of your surgical team if the Checklist is used in this hospital and if it will be used in your case. If it hasn't been implemented yet, ask what checks are in place to make your surgery safe.

HOW CAN I HELP THE SURGICAL TEAM WITH THE CHECKLIST?

As you are prepared for the operating room, staff in the different areas will ask you to say your name, date of birth, allergies and ask other questions to ensure they have all the correct information to keep you safe. Fully answer the questions and ask for clarification if you don't understand. You will be asked these questions several times to make sure *everyone* has the necessary information.

Good communication between patients, families and the surgical team is the most important safety step in your surgical care and you have an essential role in it.

We encourage you to ask, listen, and talk to your surgical team – they will welcome your opinion because their objective is to keep you safe.



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“Better is possible. It does not take genius. It takes diligence. It takes moral clarity. It takes ingenuity. Above all, it takes a willingness to try.”

Atul Gawande



Every patient safe

To see a copy of the checklist or for more information visit: www.patientsforpatientsafety.ca