

TIP SHEET FOR PATIENTS HAVING SURGERY

Before Surgery

- Stop smoking for at least two weeks prior to surgery.
- No dental procedures one week prior to surgery.
- Maintain good nutrition.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Limit alcohol intake for at least three days before surgery.
- Don't take Advil, Motrin, aspirin, or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs before surgery.
- Discuss any herbal supplements or vitamins that you are taking with your doctor to make sure it is safe to continue taking them before surgery and during recovery.
- Refrain from taking certain herbal supplements that can predispose to bleeding and interfere with healing. Some of these are ginkgo biloba, vitamin E, St. John's wort, and garlic.
- Remain on your drug regimens for hypertension and diabetes.

Additionally Before Skin Surgery

- Avoid tanning before surgery.
- Let your surgeon know well in advance of surgery if you use any topical agents on your skin.
- Tell you doctor if you get "cold sores" or have had herpes zoster (shingles).

After Surgery

- Get good bed rest.
- Keep your head elevated as much as possible to limit swelling for head and neck surgeries; sleep on multiple pillows at night.
- Stop smoking for two to four weeks after surgery.
- No dental procedures two to three weeks after surgery.
- Keep up the good nutrition.
- Maintain adequate hydration.
- Limit alcohol intake.

Additionally After Skin Surgery

- Stay out of the sun.
- Wear sunscreen for at least six months after surgery.
- Use meticulous hygiene around the scar.
- Use topical double antibiotic ointment on the incision for at least three days after surgery.
- Do not get the scar wet for the first 48 hours; after that, clean gently and pat dry.