

# HOSPITAL TO HOME

A RECOVERY GUIDE FOR PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

This guide includes helpful information as you prepare for and recover from surgery.

## Breast Surgery

**Lumpectomy** – is a surgery where part of your breast is removed

**Mastectomy** – is a surgery where all of your breast is removed

Procedures you may expect during your visit include:

**Needle (Wire) Localization Biopsy** – A small wire guided needle that is put in the breast to help locate the lump/abnormality.

**Sentinel Node Mapping** – A procedure where radioactive material is injected around your nipple so the doctors can see if the cells have spread to your lymph nodes.

## The WRH MY CARE JOURNEY App helps YOU and your FAMILY:

- ✓ Know what to expect in the hospital
- ✓ Play an active role in your treatment
- ✓ Understand next steps in your care



Download the WRH My Care Journey App for more information on your stay and recovery



# BREAST SURGERY

A PREPARATION & RECOVERY GUIDE FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY



[WRHCareJourney.ca](http://WRHCareJourney.ca)

## PREPARING FOR SURGERY

- Your surgeon's office will provide you with a date for surgery.
- Prior to the surgery, a clerk from the hospital will call to setup a date for your pre-admission session. This will take place in the hospital's Pre-Admission Clinic or by phone, depending on your condition.
- During the session you will:
  - Learn how to prepare for a safe surgery and recovery;
  - Be expected to provide your health card and list of current medications;
  - Be asked questions about your medical history; and
  - Have an opportunity to ask questions.
- Continue to take your medications and eat regular meals on the day of your pre-admission session. Do not eat or drink after midnight the night before your surgery.
- If you require either needle localization or sentinel node mapping prior to surgery you will be told to come in several hours earlier or the day before. Follow the direction given to you by the Breast Health Centre.
  - Those who receive a needle localization the day before your surgery, will go home with a large bandage to cover the area. Do not shower after the bandage is put on.
  - **You will not be able to drive after your surgery. Make plans to have someone come with you and take you home after your surgery.**

## DAY OF SURGERY

- Bring your health card and a list of current medications.
- Check-in at the Admitting Department, located at the main entrance of the hospitals.
- Upon arrival to Day Surgery you will change into a gown and your care team will prepare you for surgery.
- You will be going home on the same day as your surgery.

## RECOVERING AT HOME

- If sentinel node mapping was done you may notice a blue/grey colour to your face, skin and urine. This is caused by the dye that was injected and will fade over time.
- Avoid heavy lifting for two weeks after your surgery. Talk to your doctor about when to start recovery exercises, resume normal activities and return to work.
- If you had a lumpectomy, wear a good fitting bra after your surgery. This firm support can help you to feel better.
- Avoid laying on the site of surgery for a couple of days.
- Get adequate rest and sleep to help with healing.
- Take your pain medication as directed. Do not drink alcohol or operate machinery if taking medication for pain.
- Eat a well-balanced diet including foods high in protein and vitamins to help with healing.
- Drink 6-8 glasses of water per day.
- Do deep breathing and coughing on a regular basis (every 1-2hrs) to keep your lungs clear.

## CARING FOR YOUR WOUND

- Keep the incision clean and dry. Follow instructions given to you by your surgeon.
- A small amount of swelling at the incision site is normal.
- You may go home with a drain(s). Do not immerse the drain(s) in water and keep the area dry. Your care team will teach you how to care for your drain(s).
- If steri-strips (white tape) were used to close the incision they will fall off naturally. Avoid touching the bandages.
- Don't rub or scratch the area. Let your incision heal naturally.

**If you experience any of the symptoms below, you should seek immediate medical attention or go to the Emergency Department.**

- Fever, chills, or temperatures of 38°C (101°F) or more
- Severe redness, swelling or warmth at the incision site
- Severe or increased pain at the incision site
- Bright red bleeding from the incision site
- Coloured or foul-smelling drainage from the incision site
- Shortness of breath or chest pain

**If you have questions during your journey, ask!**

