

Your Heart Surgery

Reading this guide will help you get ready for your heart surgery.

The morning of your heart surgery you will be admitted to the Hamilton General Hospital, 237 Barton Street East, Hamilton.

Before you come to the hospital, you will need to do some things at home to get ready.

Please follow these instructions. If you have questions about your visit or need to change your appointment, call your surgeon's office.

If you have any questions, call your surgeon's office.

1 to 2 weeks before your surgery


- Prepare frozen meals and have a supply of groceries before your surgery so they are readily available after your surgery.
 - Arrange to have someone pick you up before 9:00 a.m. the day you leave the hospital. Expect to leave the hospital 4 to 5 days after your surgery. Recovery time varies from person to person.
 - If you live alone, you are advised to have a family member or friend stay with you for 2 weeks after your surgery. Most patients are not eligible for home services from the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integrated Network or HNHB LHIN, formerly called CCAC.
 - You may wish to go to a retirement home for 2 weeks after your surgery to have help while you recover. There is a cost for this type of care. Call your local HNHB LHIN office for information about this, as you will need to make these arrangements before your surgery.
 - If you are a caregiver for your spouse or disabled child, you may be eligible for home services. Call the local HNHB LHIN office for information.
 - You will not be able to drive for 4 to 6 weeks after your surgery, or advised by your surgeon. Make plans to have someone pick you up from the hospital when you are ready to go home, take you to doctor appointments until you are able to drive yourself, and do errands for you.
 - Women should pack a bra size 1 size larger, to wear after surgery, so it feels comfortable around your chest.
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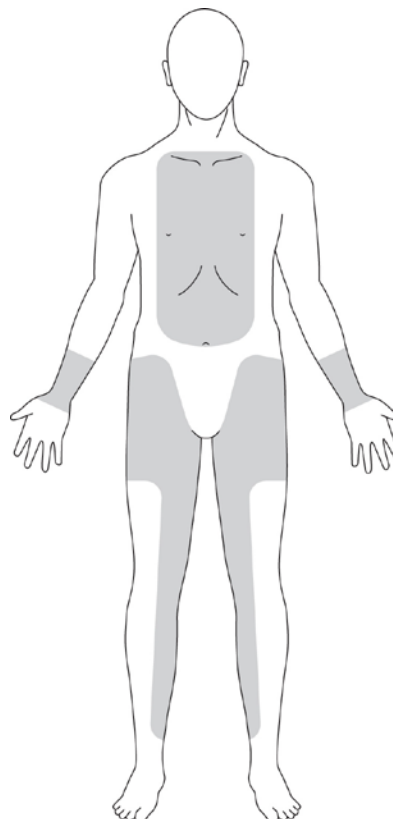
The night before your surgery

- You may eat and drink until 12:00 midnight.
- After midnight, you cannot have anything to eat or drink. This includes sucking candies and chewing gum. You can take sips of water to take your medications the morning of your surgery.
- You will need to have 2 packages of chlorhexidine scrub sponges. You can buy the sponges at the West End Urgent Care Centre, 690 Main Street West, Hamilton (this is where your Pre-op Clinic appointment was).



- The night before surgery and the morning of surgery, wash and rinse your hair first using your normal shampoo. Make sure you completely rinse the shampoo from your hair and body.
- Wash your body with regular soap. Make sure you completely rinse off the soap from your body.
- Now begin using one of the scrub sponges you purchased. Wash the shaded areas as shown on the diagram, nipple to nipple, collar bone down to umbilicus, both wrists, inside of both legs and both groins. Avoid scrubbing your skin too hard.

- Never use the sponge near your eyes. 
- Once you have completed the scrub, rinse the soap solution off your body completely.
- Pat yourself dry with a clean freshly washed towel. **DO NOT** apply any powders, deodorants or lotions.
- Dress with freshly washed clothes.



The morning of your surgery

- Wash your body with the 2nd scrub sponge, as you did the night before.
- Remove contact lenses, make-up, nail polish, earrings and all other jewellery.
- **Do not eat or drink.**
- **Take any medications as listed on the yellow medication sheet.**

The day of your surgery

- We will need to know where to contact your family while you are in hospital. If your family is from out-of-town, bring information where they are staying and a phone number to contact them.



The day of your surgery (continued)

Come to the: **Hamilton General Hospital**
237 Barton Street East
Hamilton, Ontario



- If you cannot walk a long distance, wheelchairs are located near the Information Desk at the main entrance.
- Go to Patient Registration on the Main Level.
- After you have registered, you will go to Same Day Surgery. Take the elevator to the 3rd floor and follow the signs to Same Day Surgery. Patient Registration staff will direct you.
- Your family can stay with you while you wait for your surgery.
- The average length of time for your surgery is 4 to 6 hours, unless you have been told otherwise by your surgeon.
- You will be taken to the ICU West after your surgery.
- The surgeon will talk to your family about the surgery after it is done.

After your surgery

Days after your surgery	Where you will be
Day 1 to 2	<p data-bbox="440 394 963 436">Intensive Care Unit (ICU West)</p> <p data-bbox="440 447 857 489">While you are in the ICU:</p> <ul data-bbox="467 495 1507 982" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="467 495 1373 537">• you will be closely watched by the health care team. <li data-bbox="467 541 1507 583">• machines will record your heart rhythm and blood pressure. <li data-bbox="467 588 1484 667">• you will not be able to talk while you have a breathing tube in your throat. <li data-bbox="467 672 1125 714">• you will be given medication for pain. <li data-bbox="467 718 1362 798">• the health care team will help you roll in bed, sit up, take deep breaths and cough. <li data-bbox="467 802 1507 844">• most of the tubes will be removed before you leave the ICU. <li data-bbox="467 848 1495 982">• have a family member bring your hearing aids, glasses and dentures, and personal care items such as hairbrush, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant and shaving supplies.
Day 1 to 5	<p data-bbox="440 1018 574 1060">5 South</p> <p data-bbox="440 1071 870 1113">While you are on 5 South:</p> <ul data-bbox="467 1119 1442 1423" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="467 1119 1105 1161">• your heart rhythm will be monitored. <li data-bbox="467 1165 1442 1245">• the health care team will help you to sit up in a chair, walk to the bathroom and take deep breaths and cough. <li data-bbox="467 1249 1235 1291">• you will start drinking fluids and eating food. <li data-bbox="467 1295 1341 1337">• medications to help reduce pain will be continued. <li data-bbox="467 1341 1271 1423">• family members can bring your robe, pyjamas and non-slip footwear. <p data-bbox="440 1465 911 1507">As you progress on 5 South:</p> <ul data-bbox="467 1514 1479 1728" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="467 1514 1203 1556">• you will be encouraged to walk in the hall. <li data-bbox="467 1560 1479 1640">• the health care team will review your medications, incision care and follow-up tests with you. <li data-bbox="467 1644 1474 1728">• you will be given the book, “Path to Recovery After Heart Surgery” that contains information for recovering at home. <p data-bbox="467 1770 1495 1890">To also help prepare you for going home, you are encouraged to attend a discharge class. Your family is also encouraged to attend this class.</p>

Going home

When you go home:

- Arrange to have someone bring in your clothes and shoes one or two days before you go home.
- You will not be able to drive or sit behind an air bag for 4 to 6 weeks, or as advised by your surgeon.
- You may find holding a pillow against your chest for support helpful when you are travelling in a car. Arrange to have a pillow for your ride home.
- You will need to keep active using the exercise guidelines you learned on 5 South. Help from your family and friends is encouraged.
- When you are at home, you may have questions about:
 - your medications
 - any aches, pain or discomfort
 - your activity guidelines
 - your incisions
 - what to expect with normal healing

Once you are home, if you have any questions call your family doctor or a nurse clinician at the Cardiac Health and Rehabilitation Centre at 905-577-8033.

Follow-up appointments after going home

Time in weeks	Appointment
1 week	Family Doctor
3 to 8 weeks	Cardiovascular Surgeon
4 to 8 weeks	Cardiologist
6 to 8 weeks	Cardiac Health and Rehabilitation Centre

Before you leave the hospital:

- appointments will be made for you, or
- information about making appointments will be reviewed

My questions
