

Your Vascular Surgery

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

The morning of your vascular 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.

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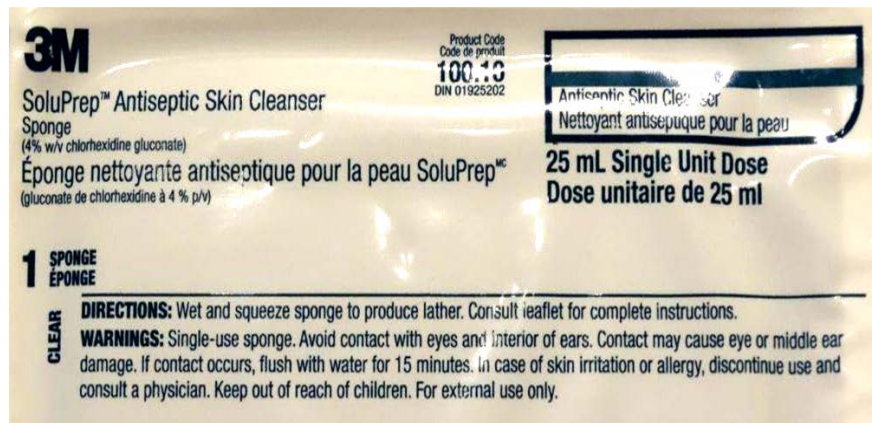
1 to 2 weeks before your surgery

- 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 am the day you leave the hospital. Ask your nurse when you can expect to leave the hospital. 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 Integration 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 as 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 and do errands for you until you are able to drive yourself.



Before your surgery

- You will need to have 2 packages of chlorhexidine scrub sponges.
 - One package for the **night before** your surgery.
 - One package for the **morning of** your surgery.
- 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 same building as the Urgent Care Centre).



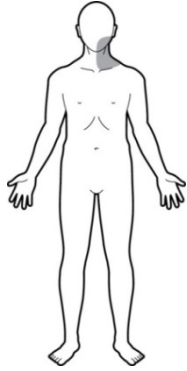
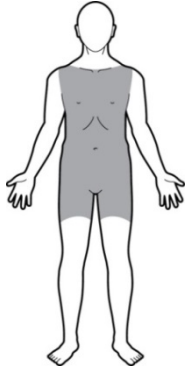
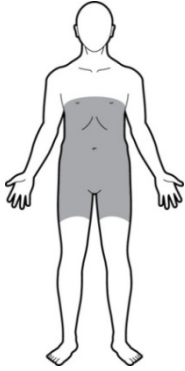
Important Information

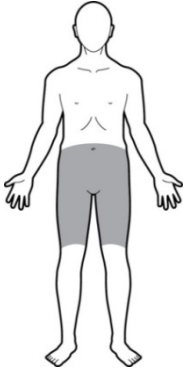
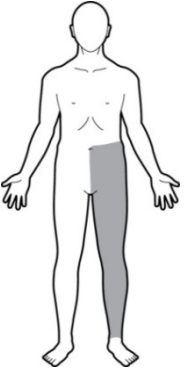
- Never use the sponge near your eyes.
- Once you have completed the scrub, rinse the soap solution off your body completely.
- Pat yourself dry with a clean freshly washed towel. **DO NOT** apply any powders, deodorants or lotions.
- Dress with freshly washed clothes.



The night before your surgery

- Wash and rinse your hair 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 that you purchased.
- Wash the shaded areas as shown on the diagram below according to the surgery you are having. Avoid scrubbing your skin too hard.

Carotid endarterectomy	Open TAAA/ AA repair	Open AAA Ileo-femoral bypass
		

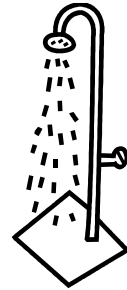
EVAR, TEVAR, FEVAR, BEVAR, Angioplasty, Femoral aneurysm repair/ Profundoplasty	Leg bypass, varicose veins, leg amputation
	

TAA – Thoracic Aortic Aneurysm
AAA – Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm
AA – Aortic Aneurysm

EVAR – Endovascular Aneurysm Repair
TEVAR – Thoracic Endovascular Aneurysm Repair
FEVAR – Fenestrated Endovascular Aneurysm Repair
BEVAR – Branched Endovascular Aneurysm Repair

The morning of your surgery

- Wash your body again with regular soap, as you did the night before (see page 3).
- Using the 2nd scrub brush, wash the shaded area of your body again, as you did the night before (see page 3).
- **Do not eat or drink.**
- **Take any medications as listed on the yellow medication sheet.**



What do I bring to the hospital?

- Your health card.
- Your inhalers, insulin, nitro spray, eye drops or any other medications you need to take while in the hospital.
- Loose comfortable clothing, housecoat and non-slip footwear (no flip flops).
- Personal hygiene products such as deodorant, hair brush, comb, toothpaste and toothbrush.
- Glasses, hearing aids and dentures. Bring all of the cases for these items.
- If you have sleep apnea, you must bring your CPAP machine (clean and in working order). Otherwise your surgery may be cancelled.

When you arrive at the Hamilton General Hospital

Go to Patient Registration on the Main Level.

Where can my family wait?

Your family can wait in the OR waiting room on the 3rd floor.

During your surgery

In the operating room you will meet the nurses who will be providing help during the surgery. They will position you on the operating table.

Your skin will be cleaned with a special solution and you will be covered with special drapes and blankets. Tell the nurses if you are uncomfortable.

Depending on the type of surgery you have, you may be offered local anesthesia (freezing) with sedation or a general anesthetic (completely "asleep"). The type of anesthetic you receive depends on your current health and the type of surgery you are having.

If you need an epidural for pain control after your surgery, it will be placed before you go to sleep.

You may also need special intravenous lines to measure your blood pressure, do blood tests and give fluids during your surgery.

A tube may be placed through your nostril and down to your stomach to drain fluids during the surgery.

Often after surgery, your intestinal tract takes time to start working normally again. If you have a tube in your nose, it will remain until your intestinal tract begins to work normally again.

After your surgery

After surgery you will be taken to the Post-Anaesthetic Care Unit (PACU) or Recovery Room for a couple of hours. From there you will be taken to the Vascular Unit on 4 West.

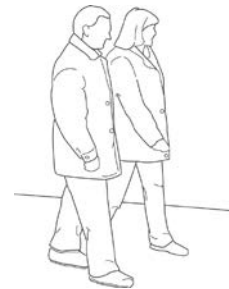
The nurses on the Vascular Unit will take your blood pressure and check your incision sites a number of times throughout the night. They will also check the circulation in your feet to make sure that the graft has remained open.

The next day you will be on a regular diet. The physiotherapist will help you begin walking around the unit. You may also have blood tests taken. Your intravenous line will be removed once you are eating and drinking well. Most people go home on the 2nd or 3rd day after surgery.

Going home

When you get home:

- Go for a walk each day.
- Do not lift or push anything over 4.5 kilograms or 10 pounds for the next 4 to 6 weeks – this includes children, pets, groceries, laundry and weights.
- Do not drive until you have seen your surgeon. Your surgeon will then tell you when it is safe for you to drive.
- You can shower but do not soak in the tub until after your clips have been removed.



You will begin to feel like your normal self within 6 to 8 weeks from the time of surgery depending on your level of health before surgery.

Wounds (this includes your incisions)

- If your wounds are dry and closed 2 to 3 days after surgery, you may leave the bandages off.
- You may shower 2 days after surgery.
- Allow the water and gentle soap to run down the wounds and pat dry. Do not scrub.
- Do not soak in a bath tub or go swimming until the wound is well closed and dry (about 3 to 4 weeks after surgery).



What are the signs of infection?

Signs of infection are:

- redness or heat around the wound
- green, yellow or white drainage from your wound
- opening of your wound
- fever (38.5°C or 100°F) and chills



If you have any signs of infection, call your family doctor or go to the nearest Urgent Care Centre right away.

Pain medication

You will be given a prescription for pain medication. Sometimes these medications cause constipation.



Tips to prevent constipation at home:

- Drink at least 1½ to 2 litres or 6 to 8 cups of water a day. This will help you to have a soft stool.
- People with heart failure should not drink a lot of fluids. Talk to your doctor, nurse or ask to see a dietitian. They can help you find ways to treat your constipation that is safe for you.
- Exercise and activity help your bowels to keep moving. Walking is a good way to increase activity.
- Adding fibre to your diet is a good way to prevent or treat constipation. Foods that have fibre include whole grain breads and cereals, bran, fresh fruit, vegetables and legumes (peas, beans and lentils).



Call your family doctor or pharmacist if you have questions or concerns about constipation or how to treat it at home.

