

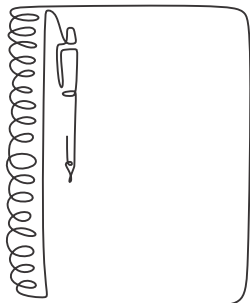
# Deciding Together: Getting ready to talk about surgery

## What is shared decision making?

This is a process in which we discuss treatment options with you to figure out the best plan for you. This often will mean talking about the surgery and other options, and how this might affect you in the short and long term. Surgery can have permanent effects: it's important to understand how those might affect your life. We may ask you questions about what your everyday life is like now to help understand how surgery might affect you.

### How to prepare for a discussion about surgery checklist:

- Bring a family or trusted friend to help listen to information
- Bring a notepad to take notes. It is okay to record the discussion as well, just make sure to ask the provider first
- Write down any questions you have so that we can answer them during the visit
- Before the visit, think about what your goals are with treatment (is it to get rid of symptoms, cure your disease, or something else?)
- Before the visit, think about things you would never want (such as a stay in a skilled nursing facility)
- Some questions may come up after the appointment. You can call the office or send a MyChart message, but it may be better to ask for another appointment to go through these in more detail.



### Pre-Surgery discussion with your surgeon:

- What is the medical condition that you need treatment for?
- What are the treatment options and the pros and cons of these options (surgery vs other treatments)?
- What treatment plan does the surgeon recommend and why?
- What other treatments might need to happen in addition to any surgery?
- What is actually being done during the surgery?
- What are the potential complications or side effects of the surgery? Are any of these permanent?
- What should you do to prepare for surgery?



### Post-surgery discussion with your surgeon:

- What should you expect after the surgery, both short and long term?
- How long will you likely need to stay in the hospital after surgery?
- What should you prepare for when you come home?
- What supplies might you need?
- How might a complication affect your recovery?
- How might the surgery affect your ability to eat or foods you can eat, your ability to walk, your strength, your memory, your ability to work or do other things that are important to you?
- What do you need to do after surgery to help recover?
- Will you need help at home? What will you need help with, and for how long?

## Notes:

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## Other things to know:

- Please ask questions about things that are unclear.
- Your doctor may ask you to explain what was discussed back to them. This is just to make sure they were clear in their explanations.
- You can change your mind about things or adjust the plan if needed.

## Helpful resources:

### How to prepare for surgery:

- <https://www.facs.org/for-patients/strong-for-surgery/>
- <https://www.facs.org/for-patients/preparing-for-your-surgery/10-questions/>

### Brochures about specific surgeries:

- <https://www.facs.org/for-patients/preparing-for-your-surgery/operation-brochures-for-patients/>

### Quitting smoking before surgery:

- <https://www.facs.org/for-patients/preparing-for-your-surgery/quit-smoking/>

### Questions specific to cancer:

- <https://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/colorectal-cancer/questions-ask-health-care-team>

### General questions about surgery:

- [https://www.surgery.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/QPL\\_baseline\\_021915.pdf](https://www.surgery.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/QPL_baseline_021915.pdf)

