

Surgical Instruction Packet

Top Surgery



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For any life-threatening emergencies please call 9-1-1



Congratulations on your upcoming surgery!

Contained within this packet is all the information you need to be well-prepared for your operation. To make things easy to understand, we have divided the information into three sections: Preop, Postop, and Forms. *Please note that depending on your surgeon, there may be some differences in your care instructions – it is important that you communicate with your surgical team.*

Please be sure to scroll through each page of this document in order to get an idea of its contents and fill in each required field. *Note that you must sign the required forms in order to proceed with your surgery.*

Thank you, and as always, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Your Align Surgical Team

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Forms (Required)

The following forms must be completed via DocuSign in order to proceed with Surgery. If you have not received the required forms, please contact the office immediately.

- ☐ Updated Health Information
- ☐ Preview of Surgery Informed Consent
- ☐ Preview of COVID-19 Informed Consent
- ☐ Mental Health Consent Form
- ☐ Post-Operative Housing and Care Form
- ☐ Photograph Release and Consent Form

Preoperative Instructions & Timeline

Preoperative Timeline

4 weeks before surgery

- Obtain medical clearance letter(s) (only if instructed)
- Obtain required Labs (only if instructed)



1-2 weeks before surgery

- Preoperative Visit (usually over phone or video call)
- Prescriptions will be sent in



A few days before surgery

- Fill Prescriptions (obtained at Preoperative Visit)



Night before surgery

- Nothing to eat past midnight
- Place scopolamine patch behind ear (*wash your hands after*)



Morning of surgery

- Take Gabapentin, Celebrex, +/- Emend with a sip of water



Surgery

Medications

Your prescriptions are sent to your pharmacy after your preoperative appointment. Pick up your prescriptions **BEFORE** your operation.

- Some medications may be different depending on your needs and medical history.
- ***If there is a rash with ANY medication, stop taking the medication.***

The **NIGHT BEFORE** Surgery:

Scopolamine patch (for nausea)

- Place behind your ear **the night before the operation**
- *Do not rub your eyes, and wash your hands after touching the patch*
- Take it off the day after surgery - otherwise may cause dizziness or double vision

The **MORNING** of Surgery:

Emend (for nausea)

Celebrex and Gabapentin (for pain)

- **AFTER speaking with your surgeon in the Preop Bay the morning of your surgery,** take these with a small sip of water

AFTER Surgery:

Pain Medications

- NSAID (such as Toradol, Ibuprofen)
- Neuromodulator (such as Gabapentin)
- Narcotics (such as Percocet, Oxycodone)

*Out of an overabundance of caution, you are prescribed **Narcan**, which is an antidote for narcotic overdose that your caregiver may use. It is VERY unlikely that you will need narcan. Narcotics, used appropriately, are safe. Overdose presents with slow breathing, confusion, and loss of consciousness.*

Pain after surgery is normal.

- Expect pain level to be 3-4 out of 10, not 0.
- You may taper off pain meds at any time.
- Itching from narcotic pain medication is NORMAL. Benadryl can help.

Other medications we may prescribe:

- Stool softener
- Antibiotics (such as Keflex, Augmentin)
- Anti-nausea medication (such as Zofran)
- Anti-anxiety medication (such as Ativan)
- Steroids for facial swelling
- Arnika can help reduce swelling / bruising after surgery. It is optional, and available for purchase at any pharmacy or online (amazon.com). Start 2 days prior to the operation and take for 1-2 weeks.



REFILLS: Call M-F DURING BUSINESS HOURS. If you are running low, please plan ahead. No refills can be processed over the weekend.

DISCUSS blood thinners like **Aspirin, Warfarin, or Plavix** with your surgeon.

Things to **STOP BEFORE SURGERY**

- **STOP Supplements** such as Ginseng, Turmeric, Ginkgo Biloba, St. John's Wort (do not stop suddenly), Fish Oil, and Vitamin E. DO NOT start anything new (aside from Arnika).
- **STOP SMOKING CIGARETTES (all tobacco products)** at least **1 month before and 1 month after surgery (preferably PERMANENTLY)**. Nicotine causes poor wound healing, infection, scarring, and anesthesia complications.
- **STOP ALCOHOL** at least **1 month before and 1 month after surgery**. Alcohol thins the blood and increases the risk for bleeding.
- **STOP SMOKING MARIJUANA 1 month before and 1 month after surgery** surgery. Marijuana can interfere with general anesthesia. Edibles are generally ok after surgery. DO NOT take any marijuana the morning of surgery, this can affect your heart.
- **STOP SUDAFED** and Pseudoephedrine-containing decongestants 3 days before surgery.
- **STOP ASPIRIN** and aspirin-containing products, for example, Aspirin/Alka-Seltzer/Excedrin. Talk to your surgeon if you are taking aspirin for your heart.
- **STOP OZEMPIC/WEGOVY (any semaglutide) diabetes/weight loss medication 2 weeks before surgery**. These medications increase your risk of vomiting while unconscious.
- **STOP ACCUTANE (isotretinoin) 6 months before surgery**, it will cause poor/thick scarring
- **You may need to STOP all immunomodulator biologics (examples: humira/remicade)** Talk to your surgeon about *when* to stop and restart them, since they will affect healing.

SURGERY WILL BE CANCELED if you fail to stop the use of nicotine products, marijuana, and alcohol! If you are smoker, nicotine levels will be tested preoperatively.

These instructions are subject to modification based on your medical history and your surgeon's/clinician's assessment.

HORMONES

CONTINUE ALL Hormone Therapy, unless otherwise directed by your surgeon.

- SPIRONOLACTONE – DO NOT take on the day of surgery.
- Bring all your hormones with you, in case the hospital does not carry them.
- Two months after surgery, follow up with your provider to check hormone levels.
- DO NOT STOP thyroid medication.

Night Before Surgery – Cleansing Instructions

1. Shower with mild soap (e.g., Dove, Ivory) the night before surgery, paying special attention to the surgical site(s).
2. Apply Hibiclens Antiseptic Cleanser to your body, especially the surgical sites, away from the shower stream.
3. Rinse it off with warm water, and dry with a clean towel. Put on freshly laundered nightwear.
4. On the morning of surgery, repeat the Hibiclens cleansing process without using regular soap.
5. You can buy Hibiclens at a pharmacy or online. Let the Align team know if you can't purchase it.



Post-Operative Care & What to Expect

- You should rest for the first 24 hours after surgery with your upper body elevated (use pillows to prop yourself up at a 30-45 degree angle).
- Gradually resume normal activity as instructed by your surgeon. **No strenuous activity or lifting anything heavier than 20 lbs for four to six weeks.**
- **Leave the dressings and binder in place** after surgery. Do not loosen the binder unless instructed. A small amount of bloody drainage on the dressings is normal.
- Swelling is normal. If you experience excessive swelling please contact the office.
- DO NOT shower while the dressings and binder are in place. **Sponge bathing is ok**, using care to keep dressings dry. Applying deodorant is safe. Keep the binder dry.
- Resume normal diet as tolerated. Drink adequate amounts of water to prevent dehydration.
- You may experience constipation from the pain medication. We recommend using a stool softener, such as Colace or MiraLAX, and drinking plenty of fluids.

Double Incision, Buttonhole Mastectomy, & ALL patients

The first appointment will be 7-9 days after surgery, and dressings will be removed. Further instructions for incision care will be provided at this time. Depending on your surgeon, you may continue compression for 2-3 weeks after.

Subcutaneous (Keyhole) Mastectomy

If you have drains, they may be removed at the first visit. You will need to wear a binder for a month after surgery.

Breast Reduction

If you have drains, they may be removed at the first visit. You will need to continue wearing a support bra after surgery.

Nipple Care

If you had nipple reconstruction, you may be instructed to apply aquafor or other petroleum ointment daily to help it heal.

Your team will instruct you.

Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy may help with a smoother recovery after surgery, by encouraging faster healing, decreasing swelling, and improving tissue graft survival. Though it is not mandatory, it is highly recommended. We will help you get set up with a center.

CONTACT THE OFFICE IF YOU EXPERIENCE:

- Increased swelling, bruising, redness, or pain not relieved by medication.
- Rash, nausea, headache, vomiting, or temperature over 101 degrees.
- Yellow/green/foul-smelling drainage from the incisions or bleeding not controlled with gentle pressure.

Medications and all post-op instructions will be reviewed with you in detail prior to sending you home. **If you have any issues, at any time, do not hesitate to call us!**

Guide to Post-Operative Scar Care

Use paper tape or silicone-based scar treatments for your surgical incisions. Silicone has been shown to improve the appearance of scar over time.

- Topical silicone is available over the counter in gel or sheet/tape form. Use whichever is more suitable for your incisions. Some recommended brands are:



Kelo-Cote UV



ScarAway

GEL

example: amazon.com



Biocorneum



SHEET

example: embracescarterapy.com

- Your incisions may be covered with surgical glue or tape after surgery, which will soften and peel off after about 3 weeks.
- Start using silicone tape or gel where the glue or tape has fallen off, and the incisions are fully sealed. If any scabs or raw areas remain, hold off on using topical silicone until they're closed.
 - o **If using the gel**, apply a very thin layer over the scar twice a day, letting it dry for 1-2 mins each time.
 - o **If using the sheet/tape**, keep it on as close to 24 hours a day as possible, removing it only for showers. You can reuse the same sheet until it's no longer sticky. Washing it with soap and water can make it sticky again.
- Use silicone (gel or sheet) for a full 12 months to make scars fade as much as possible.

Avoid direct sun exposure, use sunblock, and cover your scars for 12 months to prevent darkening.

Understanding Risks

Information for Patients Seeking Gender Affirming Surgery - Understanding the Risk of Regret

The team at Align Surgical Associates is dedicated to providing high-quality gender-affirming surgical care. We are committed to affirming your gender identity and offering surgical services to support your embodiment goals. As part of the informed consent process, this document aims to provide you with essential information regarding the rare, but serious, possibility of experiencing regret following medical or surgical interventions in gender-affirming care.

Understanding Regret

While instances of regret are rare, it is important to acknowledge that some individuals may come to regret their decision to undergo hormonal or surgical intervention. Gender-affirming care is deeply personal, and one's understanding of their gender identity may evolve over time. Since we cater to patients at various stages in their lives, we have observed that multiple factors can contribute to feelings of regret in relation to gender-affirming care.

Factors Contributing to Regret

Here are some reasons one might experience regret after undergoing gender-affirming interventions:

- Challenges arising from changes in social relationships (e.g., family, romantic, friendships, work)
- Shifts in life goals (e.g., desire for biological children)
- Changes in sexual orientation or preferences
- Complications related to surgery, medication, or endocrine treatment
- Dissatisfaction with surgical outcomes
- Religious or spiritual conflicts or losses
- Development of a gender-fluid or nonbinary identity
- Changes in societal understanding and acceptance of gender identity and expression
- Recognition that factors other than gender incongruence may have influenced the decision to transition

Permanent Changes and Informed Decisions

Many interventions involved in gender-affirming care can result in permanent changes. Halting or altering hormonal therapy, or undergoing additional surgeries, may not necessarily reverse changes that have already occurred, and could carry additional risks. Therefore, it is crucial that your decision to undergo surgery is based on a thorough understanding of the benefits, risks, and realistic expectations. We encourage you to discuss any questions or concerns with your healthcare team, which should include a mental health professional. Ideally, factors that could contribute to regret should be carefully considered and understood, enabling you to make the most informed and enduring decision regarding your gender-affirming care.

Addressing Regret

Even with diligent efforts to make the best decision, it is possible to experience regret. While feelings of regret are typically temporary, in rare cases they may persist. We understand the sensitivity of this topic. If you are grappling with these emotions or are concerned that you might in the future, involve your mental health provider and let your surgical team know. Our team is available to support you in navigating these emotions and in determining the best course of action. If you choose to proceed with surgery and later experience feelings of regret, do not hesitate to reach out to us and your mental health provider. We are here to support you as an individual and assist you in achieving your goals.



Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to review these documents and for trusting us with your care. Your Surgery Pre-Surgical Instruction Packet is now complete.

Sincerely,
Your Align Surgical Team



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