

# A Guide to Your Surgery



This booklet will help you understand and prepare for your surgery.  
Bring this booklet with you on the day of your surgery.

[www.muhcpatienteducation.ca](http://www.muhcpatienteducation.ca)

Centre universitaire  
de santé McGill



McGill University  
Health Centre

**PRET SURE**

Parcours de rétablissement chirurgical du CUSM  
MUHC Surgery Recovery Program

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This booklet was developed by the MUHC Surgical Recovery (SURE) working group.

We would like to recognize the MUHC Patient Education for their support throughout the development of this booklet, the design and layout, as well as for the creation of all the images.

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## IMPORTANT

Information provided by this booklet is for educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice or instruction of a professional healthcare practitioner, or to substitute medical care. Contact a qualified healthcare practitioner if you have any questions concerning your care.



This material is also available through the MUHC Patient Education website [www.muhcpatienteducation.ca](http://www.muhcpatienteducation.ca)



## About this Booklet

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### This Booklet Will:

- Help you understand and prepare for your surgery
- Explain what you can do to get better, faster
- Give you information for when you return home

Research shows that you will recover faster if you do the things explained in this booklet. There are instructions about eating and drinking, physical activity, and controlling your pain. These will help you feel better faster.

**Bring this booklet with you on the day of your surgery. Use it as a guide during your hospital stay.** Hospital staff will review it with you as you recover and before you go home.

Having surgery can be stressful for patients and their families. The good news is that you are not alone. We will support you each step of the way.

Please ask us if you have questions about your care.

### Your MUHC surgery team



**If you are not comfortable with French or English, try to have someone with you during your clinic visits and hospital stay who can help you understand.**

## **Preparing for Your Surgery**

### **Be Active**

Try to exercise every day. Exercise will help your body to be fit as possible. You will be better prepared for surgery. If you are already exercising, keep up the good work. If you are not, start adding exercise into your day. Exercise does not need to be intense to make a difference. A 15-minute walk is better than no exercise at all.



### **Stop Smoking and Vaping**

You should quit smoking and vaping at least 4 weeks before your surgery.

- Quitting before surgery can help you recover faster and prevent complications, such as pneumonia (lung infection), blood clots and infections.
- Quitting is possible even if you are a heavy smoker and have tried many times in the past.
- Your healthcare team can prescribe medication to help you stop smoking.



It is never too late to stop. See page 30 to learn more.

### **Stop Drinking Alcohol**

Do not drink alcohol for 4 weeks before your surgery. Alcohol can affect how well you recover:

- Alcohol can change the way some medications work.



Tell us if you need help to stop drinking alcohol.

## Preparing for Your Surgery

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### Cannabis Use

Let us know if you use cannabis (marijuana).

- **If you use cannabis for enjoyment or leisure reasons:**

Stop using cannabis 4 weeks before your surgery.

- **If you use cannabis, authorized by a doctor, for medical reasons:**

Let us know during your Pre-Op visit. We may ask you to take your usual morning dose if you need one, on the day of surgery. If you need another dose at the hospital, bring your cannabis and your prescription with you.



### Plan Ahead

You might need some help at home after your surgery.

Make plans with your family and friends so you will have help if you need it. Have food in the fridge or freezer that is easy to prepare.

You can also reach out to your local CLSC. They might offer services such as cleaning or meal delivery.



### Insurance Forms: CNESST, SAAQ and Salary Insurance

If you have insurance forms to be filled out, bring them to your next follow up appointment.

**Note:** There are fees to have these forms filled out.

## Preparing for Your Surgery

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### For Day Surgery Patients:

A Day Surgery means you will go home on the same day of your surgery.

Arrange to have an adult with you to take you home from the hospital and stay with you for the first 24 hours after your surgery.

**You will not be allowed to leave the hospital alone. You cannot drive, take a taxi or public transportation by yourself.**



**Your surgery will be cancelled if you do not have someone to take you home and stay with you for the first 24 hours.**

### For Patients Admitted in Hospital:

If your surgeon told you that you will be admitted to a room in the hospital after your surgery, your surgeon will tell you for how many days you are expected to stay.

Tell your nurse if you are worried about going home.

Remember to plan a ride back home.

See page 31 for information on MUHC parking rates.

## **Pre-Op Clinic Visit**

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The reason for this visit is to check your health, plan your care and make sure you are ready for surgery.

### **During your Pre-Op Clinic visit, you will meet with:**

- A nurse who will explain how to get ready for surgery, what to expect while you are in hospital.
- A doctor who will review your medication and ask you questions about your health.

If you have medical problems, you may be referred to doctor (a specialist) before surgery.

### **You might also:**

- Have blood tests
- Have an ECG (electrocardiogram)
- Meet an anesthesiologist (the doctor who puts patients to sleep for surgery).



You may need to stop taking some medication and natural products before surgery. The Pre-Op Clinic doctor will explain you which medications you should stop and which ones you should keep taking



**If you have any questions, call the Pre-operative Clinic nurses at:**

**Phone: 514-934-1934, ext. 34916**

**Days: Monday to Friday**

**Hours: 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

**This clinic is located near the cafeteria on DS1.2428 (Block D, level S1).**

## Phone Call from Admitting

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We will ask you to come 2 to 3 hours before your planned surgery time. The only exception is if your surgery is planned for 7:30 a.m. – in this case, we will ask you to come at 6:30 a.m.

The time of surgery is not exact. It can happen earlier or later than planned.

The day before your surgery, the Admitting Department will call to tell you when to come to the hospital. If your surgery is scheduled on a Monday, the hospital staff will call you the Friday before.



Date of surgery: .....

Time of arrival at the hospital: .....

Room: **Surgery Registration, Block C, level 3 (C03.7055).**

Enter the building through the Royal Victoria Hospital main entrance.

Take the first set of elevators (North). These are the first elevators you will see.

Go to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.



**If you do not get a call by 2 p.m. the day before your surgery, call the Admitting Department at 514-934-1934 ext. 31557.**

## **Cancelling Your Surgery**

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If you get sick, pregnant, or for any reason you are not able to come to the hospital for your surgery call Central Operating Room Booking (CORB) 514-934-4488.

If you call outside of opening hours, please leave a message.

### **When you call or leave a message, provide these details:**

- Your full name,
- The date of your surgery,
- Your phone number,
- Your hospital card number,
- Your surgeon's name,
- The reason for cancelling or postponing your surgery,
- How long you are not available to have the surgery.



**Exception: If you need to cancel your surgery the day before after 3 p.m.:**

Call the Admitting Department at 514-934-1934 ext 31557.



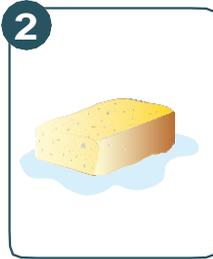
**Your surgery may be delayed or cancelled because of an emergency. Your surgeon will reschedule you as soon as possible**

## Washing

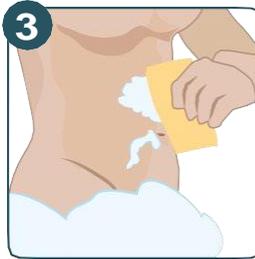
### The night before your surgery:



Use regular soap and shampoo for your face and hair.



Take a shower or a bath.



Wash your body from the neck down. Also wash your belly button and your genital area.

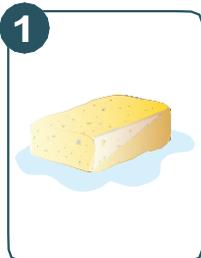


**Do not** shave the area where the surgery will be done.



Wear clean clothes to bed.

### The morning of your surgery:



Take a shower or a bath.



**Do not** put on lotion, perfume, makeup, nail polish. **Do not** wear jewelry or piercings.



**Do not** shave the area where the surgery will be done.



If you wear contact lenses, wear your glasses instead.



Put on clean, and comfortable clothes.

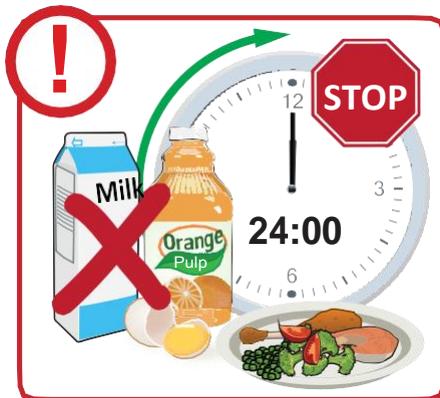
## Diet

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The Pre-op Clinic nurse will explain what to eat and drink before your surgery.

### The evening before surgery:

- Eat and drink normally until midnight
- **After midnight, do not have any food, dairy products, or juice with pulp**



**Remember:** A small number of people should not drink at all on the day of their surgery. Your nurse will tell you if you need to stop drinking at midnight.

## Diet

### The morning of surgery:

- Do not eat any food
  - Do not have any dairy products or juice with pulp
  - Drink 1 carbohydrate drink (clear juice) 2 hours before your surgery (see list below).
  - Drink it within 10 minutes.
  - Do not have any dairy products or juice with pulp
  - Stop drinking 2 hours before your surgery. This is usually the same time as you are asked to arrive at the hospital.
- Exception:** If you are asked to arrive around 6:30 a.m., stop drinking at 5:30 a.m.



**No Sugar-Free drinks**



Commercial iced tea  
**500 mL**



Lemonade without pulp  
**500 mL**



Orange juice without pulp  
**500 mL**



Apple juice  
**500 mL**

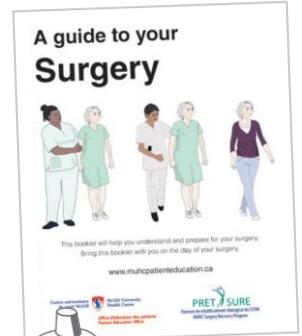
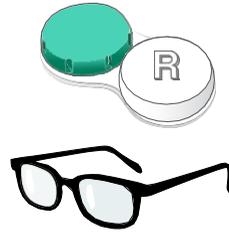


Cranberry cocktail  
**350 mL**



## What to bring to the hospital

- This booklet
- Medicare and hospital cards
- The list of all the medication you take. Your pharmacist can give you a list.
- Loose comfortable clothing (for when you will return home)
- Your CPAP machine if you have sleep apnea
- Your glasses, contact lenses, hearing aids, dentures, and their storage containers labeled with your name
- Your cane, crutches, walker, labeled with your name



## For Patients Admitted in Hospital, Also Bring:

- Bathrobe, non-slip slippers or shoes
- Toothbrush, toothpaste, mouthwash, comb, deodorant, soap, and tissues



**Bring these items in a small bag with your name on it. There is very little storage space.**

**Do not bring anything of value. Do not bring credit cards or jewelry. The hospital is not responsible for lost or stolen items.**



**Note:** To rent a TV in your room, you will need to pay with a credit card or cash. Ask someone to take the credit card home after paying or have them arrange the payment for you.

## **At the Hospital**

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### **Admitting Area**

Go to the **Registration, Surgery and Intervention Centre**, Block C, level 3 (C03.7055) at the time given.

Enter the building through the Royal Victoria Hospital main entrance.

Take the first set of elevators on your right or left (North) and go to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.

### **In the Pre-Op Admitting Area, the Nurse Will:**

- Ask you to change into a hospital gown
- Fill out a pre-operative checklist with you
- Make sure your personal items are in a safe place



### **In the Operating Room**

A patient attendant (orderly) will take you to the Operating Room.

In the Operating Room, you will meet your surgical team and the anesthesiologist. The anesthesiologist is the doctor who will give you medication so you will be asleep and pain-free during your surgery.

## At the Hospital

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### Waiting Room

Family or friends can wait for you in the waiting room located in **C03.7158 (Block C, level 3, room 7158)**. The space is small, so please limit the number of people you bring with you.



### Internet Access

There is free WiFi available at the hospital.

#### Connect to:

Network: CUSM-MUHC-PUBLIC

Username: public

Password: wifi

### Other Resources

- Cafeteria – Located in the Adult Atrium on the S1 level
- Vending machines: Block C, S1 level
- Stores / Restaurants / Coffee shops: RC (Ground floor) level and S1 level Adult Atrium
- Bank machines: Blocks C & D, RC (Ground floor) level
- McConnell Centre (patient library): Block B, RC (Ground floor) level, room BRC.0078
- Prayer and meditation room: Block C, level 2, room C02.0310.4

## In the Recovery Room

After your surgery, you will wake up in the **Recovery Room**. This is also called the **Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)**.

**There are no visitors allowed in the Recovery Room.**

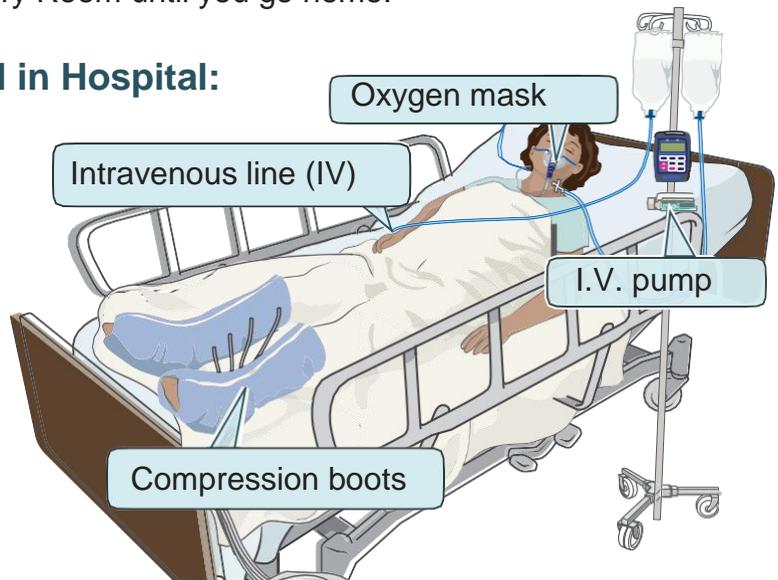
After your surgery, a nurse will call the family member or friend you have chosen to tell them how you are doing. Your family and friends can visit you when you are in your room.

### **For Day Surgery Patients:**

You will stay in the Recovery Room until you go home.

### **For Patients Admitted in Hospital:**

Your family and friends can visit you once you are brought to your room.



### **The Nurse Will:**

- Check your pulse and blood pressure
- Check your bandage(s)
- Ask you if you have pain
- Make sure you are comfortable

### **You may have:**

- An oxygen mask, giving you oxygen
- An intravenous (IV) in your arm, giving you fluids and medication
- Compression boots on your legs to help circulation and prevent blood clots

## Pain Control

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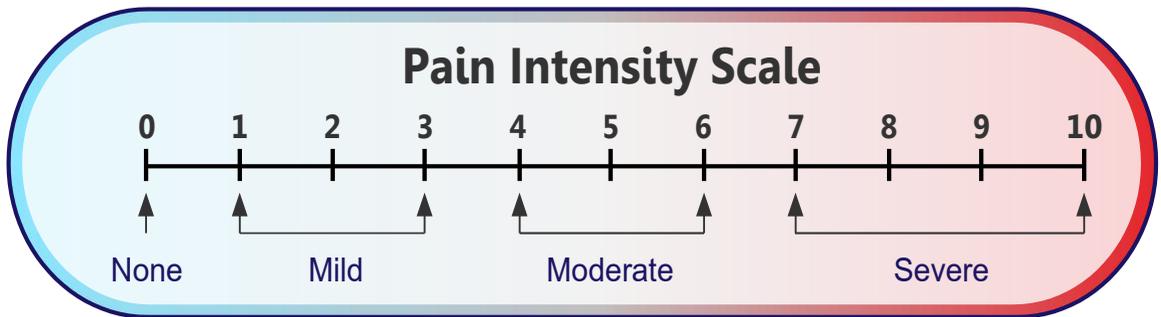
**Our goal is to keep your pain low so you can:**

- Breathe better
- Eat better
- Recover faster
- Move better
- Sleep better

Your nurse will ask you to rate your pain on a scale from 0 to 10.

### Pain intensity scale

0 means no pain and 10 is the worst pain you can imagine. Giving a number to your pain will help your nurse decide how to best manage your pain.



**Do not wait to let us know if you have pain. Having pain can make you not want to move around. This can slow down your recovery.**

### The different ways to control your pain

Your anesthesiologist will talk to you about the best ways to control your pain.

## Exercises

You must move around after surgery. This will help prevent blood clots, muscle weakness and lung problems like pneumonia.

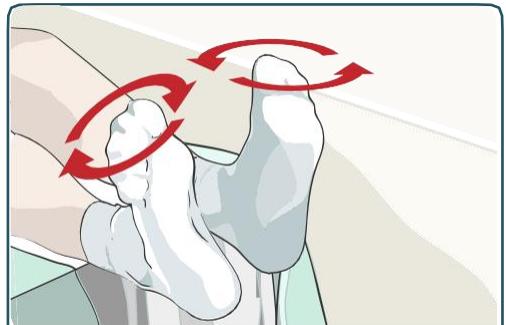
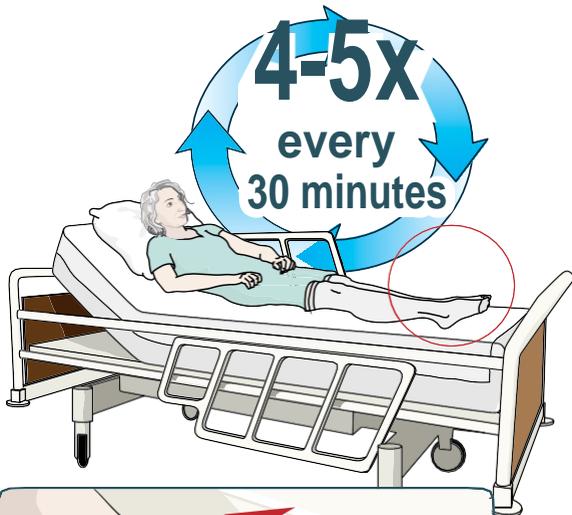
The following exercises are for **patient admitted in hospital only** (p.20-21).

Start these exercises when you wake up. Continue them while you are in the hospital.

### Leg Exercises

These exercises help your blood flow in your legs.

Repeat each exercise 4 to 5 times every 30 minutes while you are awake.



Rotate your feet to the right and left.



Wiggle your toes and bend your feet up and down.



Stretch your legs out straight.

## Exercises

### Deep Breathing and Coughing Exercises

An inspirimeter is a machine that helps you breathe deeply. It helps prevent pneumonia.

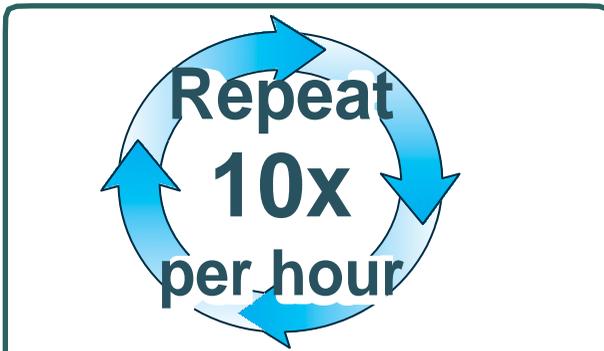
#### To Use Your Inspirimeter:



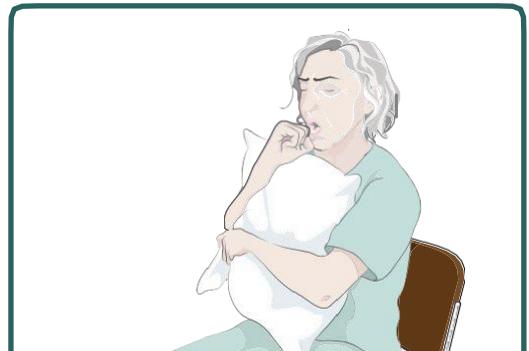
Put your lips around the mouthpiece.  
Breathe in deeply. Try to hold the yellow ball where you see the happy face (☺).



Remove the mouthpiece and breathe out.  
Rest for a few seconds.



Repeat this exercise 10 times every hour while you are awake.



Take a deep breath and cough. If you have some secretions, cough them up.

## Going Home

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Your doctor will let you go home as soon as you are ready. You must arrange to have a ride home since you cannot drive.

Before leaving the hospital, make sure you have information for your follow-up appointment with your surgeon and a prescription for your medication. Tell your nurse if you have any concerns about going home.



**Do not drive, operate machinery, or drink alcohol for 24 hours after your surgery or while taking narcotic pain medication.**



Read the next section of the booklet called “At home.”  
Ask any questions before you leave the hospital.



Your surgeon will prescribe pain medication for you. This is to help you heal and get back to your activities as quickly as possible. These medications may include Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and anti-inflammatory medications for mild to moderate pain.

If the Tylenol® and the anti-inflammatory pills do not control your pain well, then you can **add** the stronger pain medication called an opioid or a narcotic. Do not stop taking the Tylenol® and anti-inflammatories.

You must follow the instructions on the bottle. It is important to understand the risks and benefits of using an opioid.

If you have questions about pain medications, speak with your pharmacist or your surgeon.

**Not sure what questions to ask? Want to know about how to use pain medication safely when you get home? Visit this link:**

[www.ismp-canada.org/download/MedRec/MedSafety\\_5\\_questions\\_to\\_ask\\_poster.pdf](http://www.ismp-canada.org/download/MedRec/MedSafety_5_questions_to_ask_poster.pdf)



**If you have severe pain that is not helped by the medications you have been prescribed, call your Surgeon's Office or go to the Emergency Department (ED).**



## Did you know that pain medication can cause constipation?

To help your bowels stay regular:



Drink more liquids.



Eat more whole grains, fruits and vegetables.



Get regular exercise (a 10-minute walk every day is a good start).



Take stool softeners if your doctor prescribed you one.

## Caring for Your Incisions (Cuts)

Your incision (cut) may be slightly red and uncomfortable for 1-2 weeks after surgery.

You have ..... dressing(s) (bandages).

These can be removed ..... days after your surgery.

It is normal if your dressing has a small amount of blood on it.

- After removing the dressing you will see small adhesive tapes called “steristrips” covering your incision. 7 days after your surgery remove the steristrips if they have not peeled off by themselves.

### **Washing:**

You can take a shower: ..... days after your surgery.

Do not take a bath for: ..... weeks.

Once the dressing is removed, let the water run softly over your incision(s) and wash the area gently. **Do not scrub.**

### **Stitches/clips:**

- Your nurse will make a request to your CLSC to remove your clips or stitches about ..... days after your surgery. The CLSC will call you at home.
- Some stitches will melt away by themselves. If you have this type of stitches, they don’t need to be removed.
- Other: .....

## Diet

If you have any diet restrictions, check with your medical team about what to eat and drink.

Otherwise, you can eat and drink whatever you want. Eat foods with fiber (fruits, vegetables, whole grains). Drink plenty of fluids to help prevent constipation.

Eat foods that have protein to help your body heal. Meat, fish, chicken and dairy products are good sources of protein.

If you get full quickly, try eating smaller amounts at each meal and add nutritious snacks between meals. Try high protein, high calorie shakes or commercial supplements.



**If you have nausea that doesn't go away and you can't keep anything down, call your surgeon's office. If you cannot reach your surgeon or nurse, go to the Emergency Department (ED).**

### For Day Surgery Patients

Some patients feel nauseous (feeling that you need to vomit) after general anesthesia or when taking pain medication. Try drinking fluids and don't eat big amounts in the first 24 hours after surgery. Gradually return to your regular diet.

## Exercises and Activities

It is normal to feel tired after your surgery. Remember to rest between activities.

### Family and Friends Can Help With:

- Transportation
- Meal preparation
- Grocery shopping
- Cleaning house
- Laundry



- Walk every day. It is good exercise (shopping malls are good places to walk in the winter and summer).
- For most people, there are no limits on physical activity after surgery, including sex. Your surgeon will let you know if there are any limits.
- You can slowly go back to all your usual activities when you feel like it. Continue to increase your activities each day.
- Do not drive while you are taking narcotic pain medication.
- Your surgeon will recommend when you are able to return to your job. This will depend on your surgery, recovery and your type of work.

## When to Get Help



If any of these happen call your surgeon's office. If you cannot reach your surgeon or nurse, go to the Emergency Department (ED).



You feel extremely weak



You have trouble breathing



You have a fever higher than 38°C (100.4°F)



You cannot drink or keep liquids or solid foods down (nausea or vomiting)



Your incisions are warm, red and hard or you see pus coming out



You have redness, swelling, warmth or pain in either leg



You have more pain and your pain medication does not help

## Follow-up Appointment

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You will get a follow-up appointment, or you will be asked to make your own follow-up appointment with your surgeon.

### If You Have Any Questions, Phone Us:

Name of surgeon: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

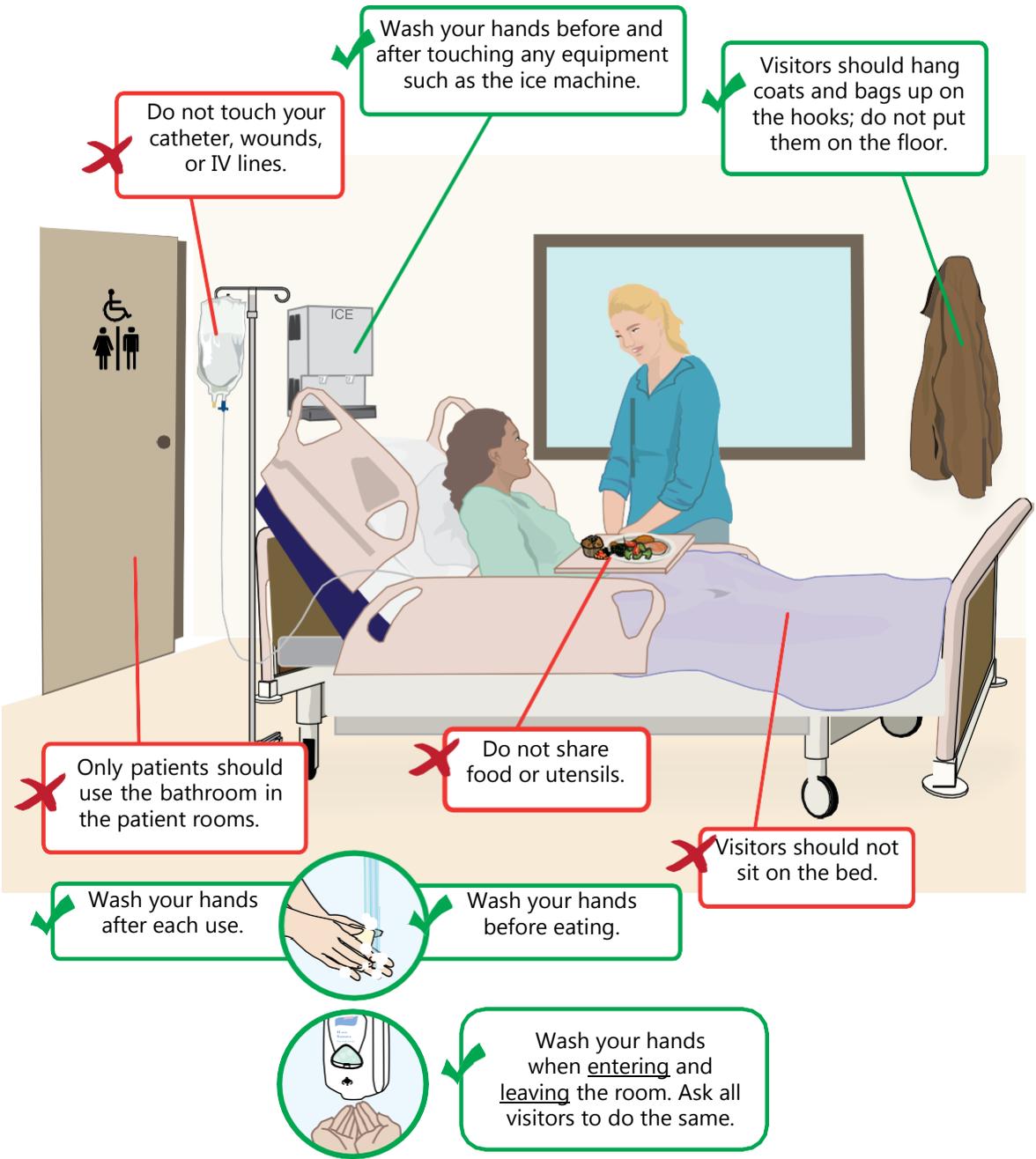
### Other Phone Numbers:

**MUHC Appointment and Referral Centre:**  
514-934-8488  
(Monday to Friday  
from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

**Info-Santé: 811**  
(Contact a nurse for  
non-urgent health issue-  
24 hours a day,  
and 365 days a year)



# Tips for Preventing Infection in the Hospital Room



**X** Do not touch your catheter, wounds, or IV lines.

**✓** Wash your hands before and after touching any equipment such as the ice machine.

**✓** Visitors should hang coats and bags up on the hooks; do not put them on the floor.

**X** Only patients should use the bathroom in the patient rooms.

**X** Do not share food or utensils.

**X** Visitors should not sit on the bed.

**✓** Wash your hands after each use.



**✓** Wash your hands before eating.



**✓** Wash your hands when entering and leaving the room. Ask all visitors to do the same.

## Websites of Interest

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### Resources to Help You Stop Smoking

- **Quit line** : 1-866-527-7383 (free) or [www.iqitnow.qc.ca](http://www.iqitnow.qc.ca)
- **Quit Smoking Centers**, ask your **CLSC** for information
- **The Quebec Lung Association**: 1-888-768-6669 (free)  
or: [www.pq.lung.ca](http://www.pq.lung.ca)
- **Smoking cessation clinic at the MUHC**:  
Send the consultation by fax: 514-934-8488  
(requires referral from your doctor).



### Looking For More Information on Your Surgery

#### **MUHC Libraries – Patient portal:**

[www.muclibraries.ca/patients/](http://www.muclibraries.ca/patients/)

#### **For more information about anesthesia:**

[www.cas.ca/en/about-cas/advocacy/anesthesia-faq](http://www.cas.ca/en/about-cas/advocacy/anesthesia-faq)

#### **MUHC parking information:**

[www.muhc.ca/patient-and-visitor-parking](http://www.muhc.ca/patient-and-visitor-parking)



# Parking Information

Note that these rates were in effect in November 2020 and could have changed since the printing of this booklet.

For any updated information, visit:

<https://muhc.ca/patient-and-visitor-parking#glen>



## Daily Rate

Less than 2 hours	<b>FREE</b>
2h - 3h59	<b>\$6</b>
4-24 hours	<b>\$10</b>

## Parking Pass Rate

7 days	<b>\$45</b>
30 days	<b>\$90 *</b>

## Parking Rate for Frequent User \*

A frequent user is an out-patient who visits the hospital by car for their appointments or treatments at least ten (10) times per month.

\* These parking rates do not apply to the staff nor its physicians.

7 days	<b>\$22.50</b>	Unlimited entry and exit at the hospital where the pass was purchased. Certain conditions apply
30 days	<b>\$45</b>	

**10 visits(flexible) \$30**      1entryand1exitpervisit,noexpirydate

## Where to Pay



By debit card or credit card  
Visa or MasterCard

**Customer Service  
Parking Office**



By credit card  
Visa or MasterCard

**Barrier gate at exit**  
(hourly parking only)

## Contact Us



### Parking Service Desks

	Location	Extension
Montreal General Hospital	L6 – 129	43626
Lachine Hospital	OJ4	77001
Royal Victoria Hospital	D RC.1000	32330
Montreal Chest Institute	D RC.1000	32330
Montreal Children's Hospital	A RC.1000	23427
Montreal Neurological Hospital	E3-61	34625



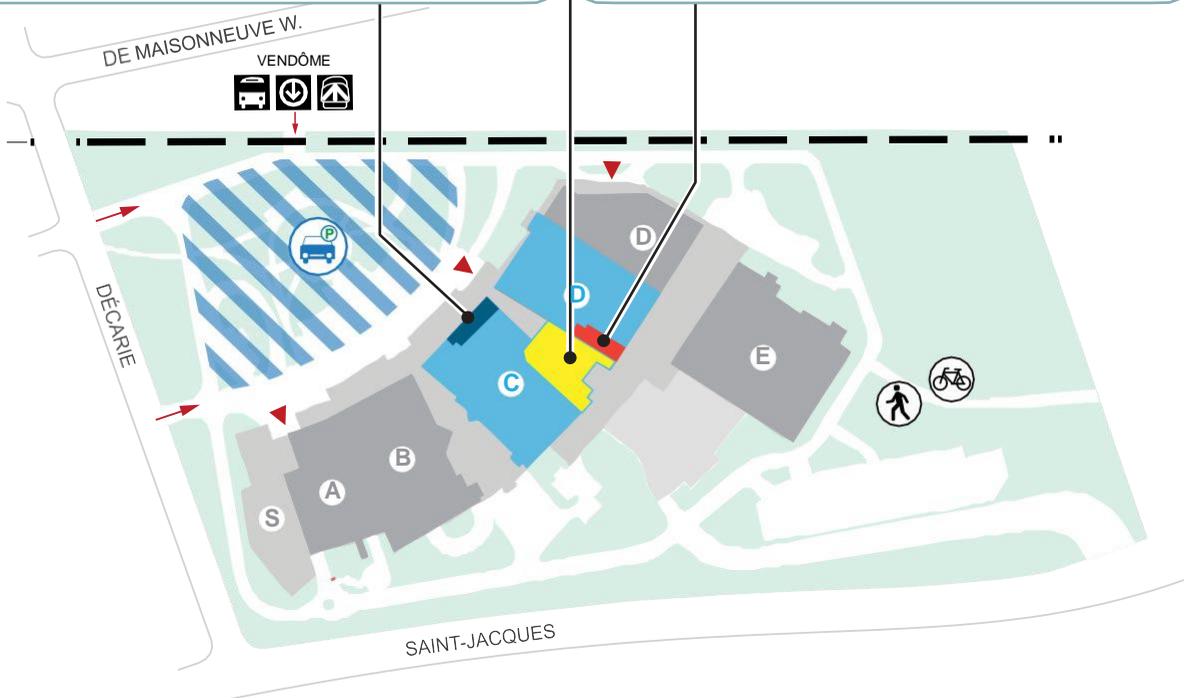
# Map of Royal Victoria Hospital - Glen site

**Cafeteria:**  
 Located off the Atrium  
 on the S1 level

**Surgery Registration:**  
 C03.7055 (Block C, level 3)

**RVH Pre-operative Clinic:**  
 Located near the cafeteria  
 on DS1. 2428 (Block D, level S1)

514-934-1934, ext. 34916  
 Monday to Friday,  
 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.



Centre universitaire  
 de santé McGill  McGill University  
 Health Centre

**Glen site:** 1001 Décarie Blvd. Montreal,  
 QC, H4A 3J1

**A + B** Montreal Children's Hospital  
**C + D** **Royal Victoria Hospital**  
**D** Montreal Chest institute  
**D** Cedars Cancer Centre

**E** MUHC Research Institute  
**S** Shriners Hospitals for Children  
 Main Entrances  
 Underground Parking  
 (patients and visitors)