



PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRE-CYSTECTOMY “PREHABILITATION”

How can I prepare for surgery?

1. Stop smoking

Continued smoking has been associated with more complications such as infection, wound breakdown, heart attack, pneumonia, blood clots in the extremities and lungs, and a longer recovery after surgery. You should quit smoking at least 8 weeks prior to surgery. Options for smoking cessation include nicotine patches, nicotine gum, and oral medications such as Chantix or Wellbutrin. You may ask your primary care doctor about these options or contact the following resources:

- Washington, DC Quit Line: 1-800-784-8669
- American Lung Association Freedom from Smoking Program: <http://www.lung.org/stop-smoking/join-freedom-from-smoking/>

2. Engage in physical activity

Daily physical activity and exercise are important to pre-conditioning prior to major surgery. Brisk walking at least 1-2 miles per day is ideal, but any activity that you can perform is beneficial. If you experience shortness of breath or chest pain during activity, please contact our office or go to the Emergency Room for evaluation. If you are not accustomed to physical activity, start slowly and try to increase your activity level gradually.

3. Obtain enough nutrition

Diets rich in fruits and vegetables are beneficial. Use olive oil rather than saturated fats or animal fats/butter. In addition, it is extremely important to obtain enough calories that will promote healing after surgery. You should buy nutritional supplement shakes to consume daily in the weeks leading up to surgery. The ideal nutritional supplement is **IMPACT: advanced recovery drink**, which has been found in studies to have less infectious and intestinal complications. This may be taken three times per day for 5-7 days prior to surgery. Also beneficial are **Ensure** or **Boost** nutritional supplements. If you are diabetic, then **Glucerna** is appropriate.

Daily multivitamins should also be taken to ensure proper nutrition prior to surgery. Especially important compounds are **Vitamin A**, **fish oil**, and **Arginine**.

Call GW Cancer Center Patient Navigator for options regarding nutrition consultation: 202-715-4979

4. Control blood sugar

Along with proper nutrition, it is important to make sure that your blood sugar is well-controlled if you are diabetic. Avoid sugar-rich foods such as soda, sweets, bread, and pasta. Make sure you are taking oral medications. Check your finger-stick regularly and administer proper insulin injections as needed.

5. Consult with a wound ostomy RN

Adjusting to life with an ileal conduit or neobladder takes time. It is helpful to have a consultation with a wound ostomy nurse to explain what to expect after surgery. The nurse will also provide instructions for maintaining the ostomy appliance. Even if you are planning to have a neobladder, this consultation is very helpful toward your recovery. Call the GW Hospital wound clinic at 202-715-4325 (alternative numbers are 202-715-4898 & 202-715-5302) to setup an appt.

6. Obtain medical clearance

Prior to surgery you will need a clearance note from your primary care doctor. If you have significant heart disease, history of heart attack or cardiac arrhythmia (i.e. afib) you may require a stress test & Cardiology clearance before surgery. Also, if you have COPD/asthma you may require pulmonary function tests and clearance from a pulmonologist.

Additional Resources

Valuable information regarding the diagnosis of Bladder Cancer, treatment options, surgical approach and recovery, and even contacts to support groups made up of people who have already gone through the treatment process may be found at:

1. Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network (BCAN): www.bcan.org
 - a. **BCAN Survivor to Survivor Program: 301-215-9099, ext. 212**
2. Urology Care Foundation: <http://www.urologyhealth.org/urologic-conditions/bladder-cancer>
3. American Cancer Society: <http://www.cancer.org/cancer/bladdercancer/index>

Additional Questions or Concerns?

Please contact our office to discuss in person: 202-741-3121