

ADVANCE PREPARATIONS

When the surgery date is confirmed

-  To start, think about your typical routine to identify critical tasks and responsibilities. Then, reach out to friends and family to delegate these essential activities to them during your recovery. For example, you may need to ask for assistance with meal preparation, transportation for your children, or communicating updates on your progress.
-  If you haven't already done so, consider joining a support group.
-  Try to get current on your paperwork and finances so you won't have to think about them for a few weeks.
-  Slow your pace and enjoy the people and things you love.
-  Stock the refrigerator with your favorite fresh foods and frozen prepared meals.
-  Set up an attractive recovery space with bed, sofa or comfy chair, side table, and soft pillows. Include your favorite music and reading material.
-  Fill and pick up prescribed medication.

ADVANCE PACKING

The week before surgery

-  If you will be spending the night at the hospital, you may want to pack the following items for your stay:
 - Toothbrush and tooth paste
 - Hair brush or comb
 - Hand cream or lotion
 - Lightweight robe
 - Underwear
 - Slip-on shoes or slippers
 - Eye glasses (if needed)
 - Book or MP3 player
 - Phone (optional) with charger
 - Phone numbers of contacts, doctors, friends, and family
 - Calendar, notepad, and pen
 - Devotional items
 - Insurance Card
 - List of current medication with dosage
 - BCRC Essentials Bag

SURGERY DAY

Before going to the hospital

-  Carefully follow all instructions for preparation given to you by your health care provider.
-  Try to make yourself as comfortable as possible. For example, take a relaxing shower and shampoo your hair .
-  Some women find it helpful to linger on their appearance before dressing. Others need a good cry. Allow yourself ample time to prepare physically and emotionally.
-  You will probably return home in the same clothes worn to the hospital so be sure they are comfortable. Consider pants with a drawstring and soft, cotton shirts that button down the front.
-  Take the bag you have packed if you are scheduled for an overnight stay.
-  Do not bring valuables including jewelry, watch, cash, or credit cards to the hospital.

AT HOME RECOVERY

Upon initial return and beyond

-  Carefully follow all wound care, drain maintenance, and bandage change instructions given to you by your health care provider.
-  Keep a primary care giver close by to provide assistance.
-  Resist receiving multiple visitors and phone calls for the first few days while you gain strength. Use your designated communications liaison to keep others informed of your progress.
-  Be conscious of your diet throughout recovery. Make healthy choices and drink plenty of water.
-  Ask your doctor about physical activity. If permitted, take short walks around the house.
-  Maintain a list of questions for your doctor that may arise during recovery.
-  Pamper yourself and take time to heal.
-  Remember that the BCRC is available for comfort, support, and equipping you on your journey toward well being and survivorship.