



Medicine  
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## PLASTIC AND COSMETIC SURGEON

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## PREOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS (GENERAL ANESTHETIC/LOCAL WITH STANDBY ANESTHETIC)

The following information will help make your surgery safe and uneventful. It is important that you understand it all. If you have any questions, please ask me or my staff. In some cases there will be variations to the instructions, and these will be discussed with you.

### Blood Work & Cardiogram

Some patients will need to have blood work and a cardiogram carried out prior to surgery if they are having a general anesthetic or a Standby Anesthetic. The office staff will advise you of this, and will discuss with you where and when it should be done.

### Nothing To Eat Or Drink (Except Essential Medications)

For all general anesthetics, and for all local anesthetics with stand-by anesthetist, you must not have anything to eat or drink as of 12 midnight the night before surgery. Please note, however, that your regular heart and blood pressure pills should be taken with a small sip of water on the morning of your surgery. Asthma inhalers should also be used normally, and brought to the operative room so that a few puffs can be administered prior to anesthesia.

### Arrange A Drive Home

You cannot be driving a motor vehicle for at least 24 hours after a sedative or general anesthetic, nor if you feel drowsy for any reason. It is essential that you arrange for a responsible person to drive you home, and stay with you the first night. For your own safety, it is not permissible for you to go home alone in a taxi. There are no exceptions to this safety rule.

Do not drive a motor vehicle if you are having any pain, as the pain may cause you to jerk the steering wheel and lose control. You also must avoid driving a car if you have had hand surgery, or are in any way restricted in your mobility or your vision, as this may compromise safe driving.

### No Aspirin, Blood Thinners, Anti-inflammatories, or Vitamins

Aspirin and all ASA (Acetylsalicylic Acid) containing products are best avoided for 2 weeks before surgery as they cause increased bleeding and bruising. Patients who have been placed on daily therapeutic aspirin to prevent strokes or heart attacks should discuss the advisability of going off aspirin with their family doctor or specialist. Aspirin containing products include Anacin, Akla Seltzer, Bufferin, Fiorinal, 222s, and Percodan. If there is any doubt about the presence of ASA in the medication you are taking, please check the label, or consult with a pharmacist. Other platelet adhesive inhibitors such as Plavix work similarly to ASA and should also be discontinued, if possible. It is permissible to take Tylenol (Acetaminophen) products.

Anti-inflammatory medications such Advil, Naprosyn and Celebrex, can promote bleeding and should also be discontinued 2 weeks before surgery. All vitamins, non-propriety supplements (such as St. John's Wort) and herbal medications (such as ginger, garlic and ginkgo biloba) should also be stopped 2 weeks before surgery because of their effect on bleeding. Surgery may not be possible in patients who have to stay on a blood thinner such as Coumadin (Warfarin). Again, please consult with your family doctor or specialist about the risks of discontinuing this medication for a few days. It normally should be stopped five days prior to surgery.

All the above medications can be resumed the day after surgery.

## **Non-Smokers & Smokers Alike Should Avoid Tobacco Products**

The nicotine of tobacco reduces the blood supply to tissue, and can significantly interfere with tissue survival and wound healing. This applies to all operations. Smoking should be stopped totally for two weeks before surgery and for one week after. This includes "second hand smoke" from people smoking around you. Do not use cigarette replacements such as Nicorette gum or nicotine patches as they have the same harmful effect on wound healing.

## **Shower – Shampoo Before Surgery**

Please have a soap and water shower (and shampoo if any head and neck surgery) or bath the night before surgery. Do not apply any skin moisturizers, perfumes, deodorants or makeup on the day of your surgery.

## **Wear Loose Clothing**

Wear comfortable loose fitting clothing, preferably buttoned, that does not compress the area of surgery and is easy to put on and take off. If facial surgery is being carried out, dark sunglasses and a scarf may be helpful.

## **Topical Anesthetic (Emla Patches/Betacaine)**

Some patients may wish to apply a topical anesthetic to the backs of their hands, to reduce the discomfort of the intravenous needle. Emla patches and Betacaine ointment are available for this purpose from your pharmacy without a prescription.

## **Home Preparations**

Please have some clear soups and clear fluids (e.g. apple juice, tea) on hand. Occasionally patients feel nauseated after a general anesthetic, and it is best to take only fluids until the stomach settles.

If you are having facial surgery, it helps to have a few extra pillows in bed to elevate the head and reduce swelling. You might wish to have magazines and videos available to help pass the time.

I hope you have a speedy recovery from your surgery.

Sincerely,  
Bernd R. Neu, M.D.