

# Heart Surgery: The Day of Your Surgery

It is finally here. The day of your heart surgery. To be completely prepared for your surgery your Cardiac care team will give you a list of instructions to follow. Here are some examples. The morning of your surgery, shower and shampoo thoroughly with Antibacterial soap. This will kill any bacteria on your skin and reduce the chance of infection. Don't eat or drink anything the morning of your surgery. If your mouth is dry, you can rinse it with water but make sure you spit it out.

If you have been told you can take some of your medications the morning of your surgery, take them with a small sip of water. Only take the medications that your Cardiac care team has said is safe to take before your surgery. Do not take Anticoagulant medications such as Warfarin. Be sure to ask your doctor about when you should stop your anticoagulant before going to the hospital.

When you arrive at the hospital you will register and be taken to a pre-op room to get prepared for your surgery. You'll change into a hospital gown when you arrive at the hospital. Remove any personal items like your glasses, contact lenses or dentures and give them to your family member for safe keeping.

At this point a member of your Cardiac care team will prepare your surgical site. An IV will be started to give your body fluids, medications and anesthesia during surgery. As with any surgery, there are risks. Make sure you understand them. If you have any concerns, ask. Your Cardiac care team wants you to feel comfortable in their care. If you haven't already done so, tell your care team about any allergies to food, medications, test dyes, or latex you may have, as well as any vision or hearing problems.

Once you are comfortable you will be asked to sign a consent form and then taken to the operating room. Heart surgeries usually last from 3 to 6 hours depending on the damage your Cardiac care team needs to repair. Once your surgery is finished, your cardiac care team will let your family know how you are doing and you will move to Intensive Care.