

Coming Home After Surgery

A simple recovery planning checklist



The procedure may be over, but recovery continues at home. A little planning can make the first days and weeks safer, calmer and less exhausting for both the patient and family.

Before surgery or discharge

- ☐ Arrange transportation home and to follow-up appointments
- ☐ Review the discharge and recovery instructions
- ☐ Prepare easy meals and hydration options
- ☐ Move frequently used items within easy reach
- ☐ Plan for pets, laundry and basic household tasks
- ☐ Confirm who will actually be available during the first few days

Help that may be useful at home

- ☐ Dressing and personal routines
- ☐ Meal preparation
- ☐ Groceries and errands
- ☐ Light housekeeping and laundry
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Companionship or supervision
- ☐ Help following the established daily routine

Ask these questions before going home

- Does the person live alone?
- When will family members return to work?
- Are stairs, pets or household tasks likely to be difficult?
- Will help be needed for a few days or several weeks?
- Who can cover mornings, evenings or overnight if needed?

Short-term support can bridge the gap

Private-duty care can be temporary. Some people need a few hours each morning, several days of support or help until driving and normal routines resume. Non-medical caregivers can assist with everyday activities while nurses, therapists and medical providers handle clinical care.

Follow the surgeon's discharge instructions and contact the medical team with questions.

For severe or rapidly worsening symptoms, difficulty breathing, chest pain, uncontrolled bleeding or another emergency, seek urgent medical care.