

Having Surgery? Be Smart, Be Prepared!

by Natalie Brown, MHA, BSN, RN

PreOp/PACU Nurse Manager

The Scout motto 'Be Prepared' was not developed with surgery patients in mind, but its application is beneficial for individuals who are scheduled for surgery in the future. By being prepared, patients are able to reduce stress levels prior to surgery and increase chances for a positive experience post-surgery.

Here are a few tips/reminders to make your surgery experience positive at McBride:

- Take good notes. All patients receive a call from Pre-Admissions to discuss all aspects of surgery preparation. Listen carefully, ask questions and jot down information during the call.
- Secure a ride and on-site representation to be with you the day of surgery. There needs to be someone on-site and available to speak with medical staff and to receive discharge instructions. It will be an extended day for the person/persons chosen, so please make sure their calendar is clear. Leaving the building is discouraged.
- NO eating, drinking, smoking or mints 'after midnight' the day of surgery. 'No' means nothing and we mean nothing ingested by mouth after the clock strikes twelve – you can brush your teeth, but do not ingest the water.
- Wear Appropriate Clothing for Procedure. For example, if you are having knee surgery, wear shorts. Your Pre-Admissions Nurse can answer 'clothing' questions related to your procedure.
- Be Prompt and Patient. Please arrive on time – there is much to be done before a procedure. Also, please be patient. Our physicians strive to begin on time, but preceding cases may require more time and attention which will affect your scheduled time of surgery.
- Redundancy for a reason. We can promise that you will be asked the same questions over and over the day of surgery. Patient safety is our #1 priority!
- Pain management. We all feel pain differently. During your stay, staff will ask if you are hurting, where it hurts and how the pain feels. It is important to communicate openly and honestly, so staff can work to make you feel comfortable.
- Courtesy and convenience. McBride offers a retail pharmacy on its campus to fill prescriptions. The retail pharmacy accepts most insurance plans, so patients can streamline the trip home. ■