



To patients, families and caregivers:

The American College of Surgeons knows that preparing for surgery can be overwhelming. We created this Patient Checklist to encourage open communication with your surgical care team. It will help you keep track of your questions so you can be sure to get them answered prior to surgery. This checklist can also help make sure that your care team understands your goals and how they can support you to achieve the best possible outcome.

Patient Checklist Inside

The American College of Surgeons created the Geriatric Surgery Verification Program to provide hospitals with a guide to provide the best surgical care for older adults. The program sets high standards of care that guide the entire team's work with a patient and their family.

facs.org/gsvpatient

ACS AMERICAN COLLEGE
OF SURGEONS

Geriatric Surgery Patient Checklist

Patient Name: _____

Type of Surgery: _____

Surgeon Name: _____

Prepare the following information **BEFORE** your first appointment with your surgeon and care team:

1. Write down what matters most to you regarding your overall health goals, treatment goals, and how these could affect your daily lifestyle (e.g. walking, where you live, recovery expectations, etc.)

2. Do you have an Advance Directive and/or a Medical Proxy identified?

NOTE: A Medical Proxy is a person that can make medical decisions on your behalf if you are no longer able to do so. Check all that apply.

- Yes, Advance Directive
- Yes, Medical Proxy (**Proxy Name:** _____)
- Yes, Other (**Please Describe:** _____)
- Copy given to my surgeon
- No

3. Are you taking any medications? This includes medicinal marijuana and over-the-counter products, such as aspirin, ibuprofen, vitamins, and herbal products. If yes, complete the table below:

Name of medication or supplement	What is it for?	When and how often do you take it?	Dosage	Concerns

4. List any allergies and reactions to medications below:

Questions to ask your surgeon/care team DURING your appointment before surgery

1. What is the operation being recommended and why is it needed?

2. **What happens if I do not have the operation? What are my alternatives to this procedure? Are there other treatment choices available based on my current medical condition?**

3. **If I am too sick or unable to speak for myself, how can I make sure you know my wishes?**

4. **If I would like my Primary Care Physician (PCP) to be kept in the loop regarding my surgery, will you be in communication with them?**

Yes (Name and phone number of PCP _____) No

5. **What should I expect if everything goes well? Will surgery improve my quality of life? In what ways?**

6. **In your opinion, will surgery make me feel better?**

7. **What are the risks and possible problems of having the operation?**

8. What can I expect during recovery? When can I go back to doing [insert valued hobby/activity]? How will I become active again or at least be up and moving after surgery?

9. Are there any special considerations needed before surgery in the following areas? How would each impact my care?

- Cognition (thinking)_____
- Delirium (confusion) risk_____
- Functional status (independence)_____
- Mobility (walking or moving)_____
- Nutrition_____
- Swallowing_____
- Need for palliative care assessment_____

10. (If applicable) I wear glasses, hearing aids, dentures, or other personal assistive devices. What do you do to ensure that these items are securely stored before surgery and promptly returned as soon as possible after surgery?

11. How will you address any pain I have after surgery? Will an opioid be prescribed? Are there any ways to manage my pain without opioids?

12. How do you identify and prevent confusion after surgery?

13. Do you anticipate any need for the following after my surgery? Check all that apply.

- Home Health Physical Therapy Skilled Nursing or Rehab

NOTE: A skilled nursing facility provides specialized care, such as physical, occupational or speech therapies. The goal is to get you well enough to go home.

If yes, is there assistance to arrange services and are you in communication with the facility to ensure that my recovery is progressing as planned?

- Yes No

14. Is your hospital involved in any age-friendly initiatives, such as the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Geriatric Surgery Verification (GSV) Program?

- Yes No

Tips for communicating with your surgeon and/or care team

It is important to communicate your feelings, questions, and concerns with your healthcare provider before having surgery. The following suggestions may help improve communication between you and your healthcare provider:

- If you do not understand your healthcare provider's responses, ask questions until you do.
- Take notes and/or ask a family member, friend, or caregiver to accompany you and take notes for you.
- Ask your healthcare provider to write down their instructions, if necessary.
- Ask your healthcare provider where you can find printed material about your condition. Many healthcare providers have this information in their offices.
- If you still have questions, ask your healthcare provider where you can go for more information.