



# Surgery Preparation & Recovery Guide

What to expect before and after your procedure at InterMed.

## Before Your Surgery

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### Advance Health Care Directive

No matter how big or small your planned surgery is, we recommend having an [Advance Health Care Directive](#) on file at your surgery location. Please also bring a printed copy on the day of surgery.

### Leave & Disability Paperwork

If you need FMLA or short-term disability forms completed, please sign a [release of information](#) and submit your paperwork in person or through the patient portal. Allow approximately 10 business days for completion. Your surgeon will determine your leave duration.

Typical Leave Durations:

- **Hysterectomy:** 3-6 weeks
- **Laparoscopic surgery:** 2 weeks
- **Hysteroscopy or minor vaginal surgery:** 1-2 days

### Medications to Have at Home

If you are able to take over-the-counter medications, we suggest stocking up before surgery:

- **Pain relief:** Ibuprofen and acetaminophen
- **Constipation (common after surgery):** Docusate sodium, Miralax, and/or senna
- **Gas pain after laparoscopy:** Simethicone

*Any prescription pain or nausea medications will be provided at your pre-op appointment or on the day of surgery.*

### Stopping Medications Before Surgery

All patients must stop NSAID medications (ibuprofen, naproxen, aspirin, etc.) 7 days before surgery. Other medication instructions will come from the anesthesia team.

**The anesthesia team will contact you** 3–7 business days before surgery to review your specific medication and fasting instructions. If you miss their call, please reach out directly:

- **InterMed ASC:** 207-347-2898
- **MMC Bramhall:** 1-800-838-8217
- **MMC Scarborough:** 207-396-7000



### **Pre-Op Skin Prep**

If you are scheduled for a hysterectomy or any surgery with a large abdominal incision, you will receive a special antiseptic soap called Hibiclens at your pre-op visit. Use it in the shower the night before and the morning of surgery.

### **A few more things:**

- Return home to clean sheets and bedclothes after surgery.
- There is no specific diet restriction after surgery.
- If your health changes before surgery, call our office. *Mild cold symptoms are generally okay to proceed.*
- You must have someone available to drive you home. **Taxis, rideshares, and public transportation are not permitted.**

## **After Your Surgery**

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### **Your Discharge Instructions**

Specific post-op instructions will be reviewed with you on the day of surgery and included in your discharge paperwork. Some surgeons have individual preferences – those will be clearly noted on your paperwork.

### **Pathology Results**

Unless your surgeon specifies otherwise, all tissue removed during surgery is sent to pathology for review. Results typically return within 5–10 business days and will be shared with you by phone or through the patient portal.

### **Surgical Photos**

For hysteroscopic and laparoscopic procedures, your surgeon will photograph their findings during surgery. Copies are available upon discharge or at your post-operative appointment.

### **Getting Home Safely**

You must have a responsible adult drive you home and stay with you for the first 24 hours after general anesthesia. Grogginess can make it unsafe to drive, make important decisions, or care for dependents alone. Your surgeon will let you know if you need support beyond 24 hours.

### **Warning Signs to Watch For**

Before you leave, your care team will review red flag symptoms with you. Call us if you experience any of the following:

- Significant or worsening pain
- Fever greater than 100.4°F
- Heavy vaginal bleeding
- Any concerns about your incision or wound



### **Wound Care**

External incisions will be closed with surgical skin glue or watertight bandages. Skin glue needs no covering. If bandages are used, you will receive removal instructions on the day of surgery.

- Showering is generally allowed within the first few days after surgery.
- Baths are restricted for 2–6 weeks (your surgeon will specify).

### **Pelvic Rest**

- After minor procedures (laparoscopy for cyst/tube removal, hysteroscopy, D&C, LEEP, vulvar cyst removal): up to 2 weeks of pelvic rest.
- After hysterectomy: at least 6 weeks of pelvic rest. Clearance will be given at your second post-op visit.

### **Activity & Exercise**

Even after major surgery, walking and using stairs is fine. Your surgeon will guide you on returning to exercise. In general, aim to gradually increase your movement each day – rest is important, but so is gentle activity.

### **Reaching Us After Surgery**

Our physicians are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call our main number at any time:

**InterMed Main Office:** 207-874-2445

*After hours, a clerk will take your information and page the on-call provider, who will call you back.*

For emergencies, please go to the **Maine Medical Center Emergency Department.**