

What Time is My Surgery?

WHAT TIME IS MY (OR YOUR FAMILY MEMBER'S) SURGERY?

This is one of the more frequently asked questions from patients who have sustained a traumatic fracture or injury. The following information will help you understand why the answer to your question is not always simple and clear-cut.

The goal of all the doctors and nurses involved with your care is to provide the best care possible at the earliest time available. However, there are many variables involved in taking a patient to the OR.

WHAT IS THE 1ST STEP?

The initial step is that you must be “Cleared for Surgery”.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE “CLEARED FOR SURGERY”?

This means that you have been medically optimized for surgery. This process can be simple and quick or long and complex depending on your age, health status, and any pre-existing medical conditions.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I AM “CLEARED FOR SURGERY”?

After you have been “cleared”, most likely you will be placed on the “add-on” list in the operating room (OR). The “add-on” list is like flying stand-by at the airport. Patients on the “add-on” list usually have their operation the same day or the next day.

TELL ME MORE ABOUT THIS “ADD-ON” LIST.

The OR maintains an “Add-on” list every day for patients needing urgent (unplanned) operations. This list includes orthopaedic patients, like you, as well as patients needing surgery by other services (such as an appendectomy by our general surgeons).

These unscheduled operations are performed in the most timely and efficient manner possible.

Due to the unexpected nature of traumatic injuries, it is difficult to predict the exact time that an patient will go to the OR. The orthopedic trauma surgeons make every effort to finalize the list by 8AM each morning; however it is still subject to change throughout a given day based on the needs of the patients at our busy Level I Trauma center. Again, think of this process as somewhat similar to flying “stand-by” at the airport.

HOW MUCH NOTICE WILL I BE PROVIDED PRIOR TO GOING TO THE OR?

Frequently, as little as 30 minutes notice is provided.

HOW WILL MY FAMILY KNOW WHEN TO BE AT THE HOSPITAL FOR MY OPERATION?

Families of adult patients **are not required** to be present at the hospital prior to or during the surgery. However, we realize that this may be important to you, and our team works hard to facilitate involvement of your family during your hospital stay. Please make sure that your nurse has appropriate contact information for family members.

WHAT IF I HAVE “POWER OF ATTORNEY (POA)” FOR MY FAMILY MEMBER?

The orthopaedic team and the anesthesia team will need to obtain an informed consent from the POA. This may be done in person or over the phone. Please make sure that we have phone contact information to reach you to facilitate effective communication (informed consent, up-dates, etc...)

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WHO DO I CALL WITH QUESTIONS OR TO RECEIVE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

If you have any questions feel free to discuss them with the expert bed side nurse, Charge Nurse at 703-776-3993, or Renee Silver RN MSN, Patient Care Director Orthopedics Center 703-776-3787.