

EMPOWERED PATIENT®

“Ten Things Patients Should Know” Series

QUESTIONS TO ASK A SURGEON AFTER A PROCEDURE

1. Were there any **COMPLICATIONS** such as lacerations (a jagged cut or tear in tissues), perforations (unintentional holes or punctures in organs) or excessive bleeding?
2. Were any **ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES** performed that you weren't expecting? What is the name of the procedure and why was it needed?
3. Is the patient at an increased risk for **INFECTION OR BLOOD CLOTS**? If pre-operative antibiotics were given when should they to be stopped? Are blood-thinning medications or other interventions needed to prevent clots?
4. What is the expected course of **RECOVERY** and has it changed at all since the surgery? Has anything occurred that will increase the recovery time?
5. What is the “**PLAN FOR CARE**” after surgery? Does the patient need to be kept warm, given oxygen, have blood sugar checked (to reduce risk of infection) or receive any special monitoring?
6. **HOW CAN YOU BE REACHED** if there is a serious problem? Will you personally answer your calls or will another doctor be covering for you in the first few days after surgery?
7. Who will be responsible for managing **PAIN MEDICATION ORDERS**? Who is to be notified if the patient's pain is not controlled?
8. When can the patient **RESUME THEIR REGULAR MEDICATIONS**? Be sure to ask about blood thinners since the patient could have a blood clot or stroke if these medications are not re-started at soon as it is safe to do so.
9. What **SIGNS OF PROBLEMS** should we be watching out for at home? Does the patient or advocate need to monitor temperature or any other vital signs? Will the patient be responsible for any wound care?
10. When should the patient see the surgeon for **FOLLOW-UP**? Do appointments need to be scheduled with the patient's primary care doctor or any other providers?