



Mastectomy and Breast Reconstruction Pre-Op Class: Day of Surgery Checklist

Today's the day!

- I haven't eaten or drank anything since midnight last night (including chewing gum, candy and mints) except medication(s) I was instructed to take with sips of water.
- I haven't put on any makeup, perfume, lotion, deodorant, or hair spray.
- I know where I'm going and I have someone to drive me, pick me up, and/or stay with me at least 24 hours after surgery.
- I am wearing loose-fitting, comfortable clothing with a loose shirt that buttons or zips up the front and rubber-soled/nonskid shoes or slip-on shoes that are easy to walk in.
- I am giving myself plenty of time to get to the hospital.
- I am not wearing any contact lenses, hair pins, dark fingernail polish, artificial nails, metals, or piercings on my body.
- I left all my valuables at home, including my wallet/purse, cash, credit cards, and jewelry (rings, earrings, and watches). I only have my photo ID, insurance card, eyeglasses, dentures, and hearing aids.
- I'm taking a car that is easy to get in and out which will make it easier for me when I leave the hospital and get discharged home.
- I packed minimally. I have my toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush, combs, lip moisturizer, deodorant). I brought earplugs and an eye-mask to help me sleep better in the hospital.
- I will choose one, or at most two, designated caregiver(s) and/or support person(s) to help me out or visit me while in the hospital. A crowd may increase the risk of infection for both me and my visitors.



Understanding Your Pain



Pain relief is an important part of the plan for your healthcare. At Torrance Memorial Medical Center, we promise to work hard to offer safe and helpful treatment when you have pain. Whether your pain is caused by disease, injury, surgery, or a medical procedure, it is important to know that most pain can be controlled. We can work together to lessen your pain and help you get well faster.

When you feel pain, please tell your doctor or nurse about it. You are the one who can best tell us about your pain. We will ask you often to rate your pain using a **0 to 10 pain rating scale**. This tells us how much pain you are feeling and how well treatments are working. We may ask other questions to help us understand your pain.

Rate your pain on a scale of 0 to 10. 0 means “no pain” and 10 means the worst possible pain. Moderate pain is in the middle, or between 4 and 6. A rating of 1 to 3 would be “mild” pain. A rating of 7 or more is “severe” pain. The goal is to treat pain early before it gets worse.

There are different kinds of pain, and you can hurt anywhere in your body. It can feel like a dull ache, or it can be sharp. Pain can be throbbing, burning, cramping, pulling, tight, stabbing, tingling, or other unpleasant feelings. Please tell your

doctor or nurse the type of pain you are having. Ask questions if you are not sure how to rate or tell us your pain.

If pain gets in the way of your usual sleep, eating, energy, activity, relationships, or mood, let us know. Pain can be slow healing and prevent you from being active. We want you to be able to take part in your care and in the things that are important to you. There are many ways to lessen pain.

Rate your pain before and after you take your pain medicine. This helps your doctor and nurse know if your medicine or other pain treatment is working.

Tell your doctor or nurse about any side effects of the pain medicine. Some medicines may change your bowel movements, or cause you to vomit, itch, feel sleepy, dizzy, or weak. If we know about these, we can try to help.

Together we can make a difference. We cannot promise to make all pain go away. But we do promise to answer your questions and to work with you to find a treatment that is safe and works best for you.

Common Myths About Pain Management

Myth: Medications will cure all pain.

Fact: Medications can help control pain, but they rarely cure it.

Myth: I shouldn't take medications unless I'm in severe pain.

Fact: Preventing pain from developing is much easier than treating pain once it has begun. For best results, take pain medication on schedule.

Myth: Taking pain medication means I'm weak.

Fact: Feeling pain is a medical problem. Taking medication can help you get more out of other treatments.

Myth: I'll get addicted to pain medication.

Fact: For those with no history of addictive disease, the risk is less than 1 percent.¹

Myth: Pain medications always cause heavy sedation.

Fact: Chronic pain can cause sleep deprivation and most opioids will cause initial sedation. However, once the patient catches up on lost sleep, continuing treatment will allow them to resume normal mental alertness and orientation.²

Myth: Effective pain management can be achieved on an “as needed” basis.

Fact: Medications provided “around the clock” have a much better impact on pain management with few side effects.³

1. Joranson, D.E.; Ryan, K.M.; Gilson, A.M.; Dahl, J.L. (2000). Trends in medical use and abuse of opioid analgesics.
2. Vilensky, W. (2002). Opioid “mythstakes”: Opioid analgesics – current clinical and regulatory perspectives.
3. Ead, H. (2005). Improving pain management for critically ill and injured patients.

Surgery Shopping List

Must-haves:

- **Hibiclens® Antiseptic Skin Cleanser** : Use one to two days before surgery to decrease the chance of infections. It tends to dry out your skin so do not use it after surgery. You can purchase this in local drugstores such as Rite Aid, CVS, Walgreens, etc.
- **Dial® Antibacterial Foaming Soap**: This unscented, foamy soap can be used after surgery. It's gentle to your skin and still gets everything clean.
- **Bacitracin or Polysporin® antibiotic and Q-tips**: Generic is fine. Apply a small amount of antibiotic ointment on the Q-tip to the area where the drainage tube exits your skin before and after you shower. This reduces the chance of infection by preventing bacteria from getting into your skin.
- **Milk of Magnesia or any stool softeners**: Pain medication can be quite constipating so it's good to have some of this in your medicine cabinet.

Nice to haves:

Suggestions from previous patients about what worked for them

- **Colgate® Wisp™**: Brush your teeth and freshen your mouth without water.
- **Razors with built-in shave bars**: When you're shaving after your surgery, you'll want it as easy as possible. Gillette Venus Breeze® or Schick Intuition® are the favorites.

- **Extra clothing**: You may not fit into your normal clothing after surgery because of drains, dressings, and swelling. Larger shirts or blouses that button in the front and pants with elastic waistbands are recommended.
- **Dressings**: Depending on your surgeon, if you'll need dressings for your incision, do not use regular gauze because that sticks to your skin. Maxi pads or panty liners are inexpensive and work great.
- **Flex straws**: They make drinking in bed so much easier.
- **Shower chairs**: If you have a seat built into your shower, you're in business. If not, shower chairs are available on Amazon or in local drugstores starting at \$40 and may be a good investment, particularly if you've had DIEP or TRAM flap.
- **Recliner**: Getting in and out of bed may be challenging for a few nights/weeks if you've had breast reconstruction. This is great if you can borrow one or you can rent one at any medical equipment and supply store.
- **Bed wedge pillow**: Helps you sleep on your back comfortably in a reclining position since laying flat may be difficult to sleep. You can purchase it at Torrance Memorial Medical Center's HealthLinks' Evelyn's Corner, Bed Bath & Beyond, or Target.
- **Camisole with drain pockets**: Make sure you ask your surgeon if you can wear a camisole after surgery before you purchase it. The camisole can be worn to hold post-surgical drains to home from the hospital or when you go out. It is available at Torrance Memorial Medical Center's HealthLinks' Evelyn's Corner.
- **Fanny pack**: If you don't want to wear the camisole, then you can wear this to hold your drains.
- **Shower drain lanyard**: Useful to hold your drains when showering. Please see Evelyn before you leave class if you need one.
- **Single-serve nutritious snacks and meals**: If you have no one to cook for you after surgery, consider cooking ahead and freezing some individual portions of your favorite meals that you can defrost and eat. Stock up your pantry and refrigerator with soup, Jell-O, power bars, fruit, nuts, real fruit popsicles, crackers, or any single-serving food.
- **Recovery entertainment**: Stock up on books, magazines, DVDs, apps, audiobooks, and Netflix downloads you enjoy. Keep in mind that you'll probably be falling asleep in the middle of whatever you're watching or reading, especially when you're taking pain medications so don't plan on digesting anything complicated and heavy. Pick things that are light and fun. Be careful with your favorite "laugh out loud" comedies because laughing after surgery hurts for a while.

Breast Cancer Resources

Before purchasing a mastectomy bra or prosthesis, it is recommended that you contact your health insurance provider to discuss reimbursement. You may also need to bring a prescription for a prosthesis from your doctor. Please call the numbers below for more information.

1. American Cancer Society "tlc" catalogue

Wide selection of mastectomy products including bras and prostheses
800-227-2345 or Cancer.org

2. Nordstrom

Del Amo Fashion Center, Lingerie Department, Second Floor
Call for fitting appointment at 310-750-1240

3. Helen's Room

Los Angeles Cancer Institute
860 Parkview Drive N.
310-524-9429

Free breast prosthesis, depending on financial need

4. Amoena Products at Nordstrom (see #2)

US.Amoena.com

5. Orthopaedic Rehabilitation Center

2375 Torrance Blvd.
310-320-2110

Hat, scarves, wigs, etc.

1. Woman-to-Woman Image Enhancement Program

310-517-4660

Torrance Memorial Medical Center (West Tower) offers free personalized consultation to help women dealing with hair loss secondary to medical treatment. Services include private instruction by a trained volunteer on appearance enhancing use of scarves, hats, and hairpieces. Call for appointment.

2. American Cancer Society "tlc" catalogue

310-348-0356

Hats, scarves, and wigs
New catalogue several times per year

3. Del Amo Fashion Wigs

3535 Torrance Blvd., Suite 3
310-540-2542
Call for hours.

4. Wigs Today

2377 Pacific Coast Highway
310-530-5915

5. American Cancer Society Wig Bank

5731 W. Slauson Ave., Suite 200
800-227-2345
By appointment only

6. Helen's Room

Los Angeles Cancer Institute
860 Parkview Drive N.
310-524-9429

Free wigs, scarves, hairpieces, hats, and breast prostheses

7. The Wig Factory

248 E. 7th St.
562-436-1888