A SURGICAL CHECKLIST FOR SENIORS

Before Surgery

Current surgery: As the patient, do you understand the necessity of this surgery and its benefits to you?
Past surgeries: Have you had surgery before? You should also include any history of a family member having problems with anesthesia.
Allergies: Do you have negative reactions to food, medicines or latex?
Lab tests and diagnostic results: Does your physician have these?
Prescriptions: Are you currently taking a prescription or any over-the-counter medications (e.g. herbals or supplements)? Have you asked your physician to recommend a geriatric specialist to help you understand the potential interaction of your existing medications and those associated with the surgery?
Neurocognitive disorders: Do you have any mental disorders your physician should know about? Has the physician conducted a preoperative cognitive assessment?
Mental health conditions: Do you suffer from depression? If so, has your physician recommended a psychiatrist for you to consult with before your surgery?
Immune system: Do you have any immune disorders, hepatitis or excessive bleeding problems?
Esophageal conditions: Do you have acid reflux or a chronic heartburn condition?
Stomach problems: Do you have any ulcers or a history of eating disorders?
Teeth: Do you have any loose teeth, dentures or bridgework?
Heart disease: Have you ever had a heart attack, angina or chest pain, high blood pressure, or do you have a family history of any of these?
Emphysema, asthma, apnea: Do you have any of these conditions or other lung or breathing problems? Do you smoke?
Arthritis: Do you have any conditions that restrict your movement?
Endocrine system disorders: Do you have diabetes or a thyroid condition?
Concerns: Do you have any concerns or anxieties about the procedure?
Primary caregiver after surgery: Whom should the physician contact after the surgery is complete? Whom should the anesthesiologist speak with about pain management after the procedure?

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After Surgery

Side effects: Are any associated with this procedure? Am I at risk for experiencing delirium after my surgery? How can I best prevent delirium and how can my caregiver and I best cope with it?
Recovery comfort: Is it possible for me to be placed in a hospital recovery room that has a window? May my caregiver bring personal photographs and a calendar to my hospital recovery room? After my surgery, who will make sure I have my hearing aid, glasses and dentures?
Travel: Will I need to arrange for transportation after the procedure? When can I go home?
Diet: What can I eat? When can I eat? Is there anything I should not eat?
Emergency: Whom do I contact in the case of an emergency?
At home: If I live alone, do I need to have someone stay with me during my recovery? If needed, can I arrange for a nurse to come daily to my house after the procedure?
Medication: When should I take (or stop taking) any medication?
Bandages: When should I change my bandages?
Activities: When can I continue with my normal daily routine? How long should I wait before becoming mobile again?
Appointment: Should I make a follow-up appointment with the physician? When?