

## A GUIDE TO ENHANCING YOUR RECOVERY AFTER SURGERY C-Section

This pamphlet is part of the Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) program at MGH. ERAS and ERAC (Enhanced Recovery After C-Section) is a standard practice for patients having a procedure in the Mass General Brigham System and affiliated hospitals.

The included information is designed to help you understand and prepare for your C-Section. Please review and ask any questions of your surgical team prior to the surgery.

ERAC is designed to keep you actively involved in your recovery prior to and after your surgery, with the overall goal for you to have a better surgical experience and get back to normal as soon as possible.

Each stage of this program is tailored to minimize your pain, avoid complications, allow for earlier resumption of food and activity, improve your recovery after surgery, and reduce the number of days you need to stay in the hospital.

Together, with your help, we can achieve these goals!

**Your Surgeon's Name:**

**Our Office Phone #:**

**Your Procedure is Scheduled On:**

**Your Need to Arrive at the Labor  
Floor on Blake 14 at:**

**Where to go:** You can park in any of the hospital's garages. When leaving, remember to pay for parking at the cashier's window before you go to your car. Enter the main lobby of the hospital and go straight down the main corridor to the central lobby, **turn left**, and follow the signs for the **Blake** building. Take the "E" elevators to the 14th floor. Due to security reasons, our unit is closed to the public. Please pick up the phone at the entrance and the staff will direct you.

**Outpatient Surgery – If you are coming in for same day surgery then you must have a ride and an escort home – for instance for a cerclage or D&E**

## How You Can Help

### WEEKS BEFORE C-SECTION

- Continue or consider starting a daily **relaxation and stress management practice**, which is known to boost the body's immunity and aid in recovery. This may include exercise, meditation, yoga, and others.
- **Eat** a mixed healthy diet or follow a specific diet prescribed by your surgeon.
- It is strongly suggested that you **stop smoking completely** at least 3 weeks before your surgery. This will reduce the chances of lung complications during and after surgery and improve your recovery. If you would like more information on how to quit smoking, speak to your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.
- **Plan ahead.** Arrange for someone to accompany you at the time of admission and at the time of discharge. Make prior preparations at home for your arrival after surgery. Make sure there is enough food and supplies. You should be able to walk and eat and care for yourself, but you may need some extra assistance initially from family or friends, especially to avoid strenuous tasks like laundry, cleaning, and grocery shopping immediately after your surgery.

### 7 DAYS BEFORE C-SECTION

- **Stop** Vitamin E supplements.
- **Stop** all herbal supplements, especially krill, garlic, ginkgo, and fish oil
- **Stop NSAIDS**, unless your surgeon has advised otherwise. This includes, but is not limited to, ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen (Aleve, Anaprox, Naprosyn), and celecoxib (Celebrex).
- **Stop 325 mg of Aspirin** unless your surgeon has advised alternate dosing. You may continue with 81 mg of Aspirin daily and can take it the morning of surgery.
- **Inform your surgeon** if you take Xarelto, Coumadin, Plavix, Eliquis, or any other anticoagulants.

### 3 DAYS BEFORE C-SECTION

- **Stay hydrated.** In the 72 hours prior to surgery, make sure you hydrate frequently with water, Gatorade, Powerade, Pedialyte, ClearFast, or other clear liquids.

## 2 DAYS BEFORE C-SECTION

- Chlorhexidine wash (see last page for instructions), if advised by your surgeon.
- If you were tested for STAPH and are positive, defer to instructions provided by your surgeon’s office for the use of Chlorhexidine wash and mupirocin nasal ointment. Your doctor will let you know if you need additional testing.

## 1 DAYS BEFORE C-SECTION

- Chlorhexidine wash (see last page for instructions), if advised by your surgeon.
- **Avoid** consumption of alcohol at least 24 hours (ideally, a month) before surgery.
- Follow your surgeon’s prescribed diet. If you do not have a prescribed diet, please eat and drink as you normally would.
- Make sure that you are well-hydrated.
- OK to eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

### At 10 pm

- **Keep drinking clear liquids throughout the evening to stay hydrated.**  
From now on, drink **CLEAR LIQUIDS ONLY**

CONTINUE	STOP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ water</li> <li>➤ juices (clear and without pulp) <u>examples:</u> apple juice, cranberry juice, grape juice</li> <li>➤ Gatorade (no red)</li> <li>➤ black tea (no milk/cream)</li> <li>➤ black coffee (no milk/cream)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ all solid foods</li> <li>➤ chewing gum</li> <li>➤ candy</li> <li>➤ yogurt</li> <li>➤ cream</li> <li>➤ dairy-based drinks / smoothies</li> <li>➤ milk</li> <li>➤ soy milk</li> <li>➤ nut milk, such as almond milk</li> <li>➤ orange juice</li> </ul>

### Before going to bed

- Drink 20-24 ounces of Gatorade (no red)

## DAY OF C-SECTION

- Chlorhexidine wash in the morning, if advised by your surgeon.
- You may have clear liquids (see table on prior page) no less than 2 hours before surgery.
- Take any permitted medications with 1-2 sips of water.
- If you are using any of these, bring them to the hospital:
  - inhalers or eye drops
  - your CPAP machine, mask, hoses
  
- Drink 20 oz of Gatorade (no red). Make sure to finish drinking at least 2 hours before your scheduled arrival time. Do not drink anything else after you finish.

## No Less Than 2 Hours Before Your Scheduled Arrival Time

- **Stop drinking completely.**  
Do not have anything to drink at all or your surgery will be cancelled.
  - **If you have diabetes** and your blood sugar is low or start to feel symptoms of low blood sugar, drink a clear liquid with sugar, such as apple juice, grape juice, or regular soda. If this does not help, drink, or eat any liquid or fluid that will raise your blood sugar.
  - **It is better to delay your surgery than to ignore a low blood sugar.**
- If you have forgotten to drink clear liquids, that is OK. Do not drink anything at this time – we will give you clear liquids through an IV when you arrive at the hospital.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR SHOWER WITH CHLORHEXIDINE

Shower or bathe daily and thoroughly with Chlorhexidine wash to help prevent infections after surgery.

- **Do not** use if you are allergic to Chlorhexidine. If allergic speak to your doctor about using an antibacterial soap instead.
- **Do not** use Chlorhexidine on your face, head, or genitals.
- **Avoid** shaving the abdomen or groin area.
- **Do not** apply powder, lotion, deodorant, or hair products after the third shower (on the day of surgery).

### Chlorhexidine shower instructions

1. Use Chlorhexidine wash instead of your regular soap. Do Not Use Both.
2. Shampoo/condition your hair as you normally do before use of the Chlorhexidine.
3. Rinse your body thoroughly with water.
4. Turn the water off to prevent rinsing the Chlorhexidine off too soon.
5. Wash from the neck downwards. Be especially careful to wash the surgical site of your operation. Be sure to get in your belly button- you can use a Q-Tip as needed to help with this.
6. Wash your body gently for 5 minutes.
7. Allow the Chlorhexidine to dry on your skin for 1 minute before rinsing off.
8. Turn water back on, rinse well, and pat dry with a clean towel.