

Undergoing Surgery During COVID-19: 10 Things to Discuss with Your Provider

The SARS-CoV-2 virus and resulting COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we manage our everyday lives, but it has not eliminated the need to seek healthcare treatment. If you are undergoing an orthopaedic procedure, here are 10 questions you may want to discuss with your provider as you consider your options.



Is telehealth an option for my appointments?

Remote video or phone consultations may be virtual options for your pre- or post-surgical appointments. These options allow those who do not need to be physically present to schedule virtual visits instead. However, not all orthopaedic appointments are appropriate for telemedicine.

Will I require screening or testing for SARS-CoV-2 or COVID-19?



Screening or testing will be required for all patients having surgery to make sure you have not been exposed to COVID-19 and have had no symptoms consistent with the disease. Or if you had COVID-19 in the past, that you are eligible for surgery.



Should I quarantine before my surgery?

It's likely your provider will recommend that you quarantine for several days before surgery. Typically, this is done between the time you were screened or tested and the time of your scheduled procedure. Your provider will offer personalized instructions and detailed precautions you should take before your procedure.

What special precautions are you taking to ensure the operating room and the surgical team are safe from COVID-19?



Facilities follow extensive cleaning, disinfection and sterilization procedures in line with government requirements and industry recommendations. Facilities also have appropriate air flow and surface disinfection in the operating rooms, which helps to decrease potential disease transmission. Operating room and other facility staff will wear personal protective equipment and are screened routinely.



What special precautions are you taking to ensure this facility is safe from COVID-19?

Facilities are practicing physical distancing and other precautionary measures, such as limitations on visitors, as recommended by federal, state and local government agencies to protect yourself. Facility staff will wear personal protective equipment and are screened routinely.



If I develop symptoms of COVID-19 or come into contact with someone that has symptoms, can I proceed with my procedure?

Please contact your provider's facility right away if you develop symptoms of COVID-19 or have come into contact with someone who has symptoms or who has tested positive. It is possible that your procedure will be postponed. Your provider will discuss your options and determine a plan of care that is right for you.



Can I bring a family member to my procedure?

Almost all orthopaedic procedures require some degree of sedation. This means someone will need to take you to the facility, and someone will need to drive you home. A friend or family member will also need to receive your discharge instructions.

Depending upon the facility, your companion may be able to wait in a specially designated area or may only be able to drop you off and pick you up at the entrance to the facility. Some exceptions may be made if you are a parent bringing a child for surgery.

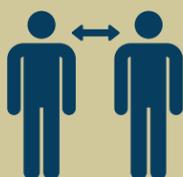
Will having this procedure put me at higher risk for COVID-19 as I recover?

Your provider understands your medical condition and made the recommendation for you to undergo a procedure after thoroughly assessing your benefits and risks – including having this surgery during the pandemic. Please discuss any concerns with your healthcare team.



What happens if I develop symptoms of COVID-19 after my surgery?

Even though you may have tested negative for COVID-19 before surgery, it is possible to contract the virus afterward. If you are experiencing symptoms such as fever, headache, nausea, vomiting or shortness of breath, contact your provider to determine the appropriate next steps.



After I am discharged, will I have to take special precautions for physical or social distancing?

It is important to take precautions against exposure to the SARS-CoV-2 virus and the spread of COVID-19 both before and after surgery. Avoid crowds, maintain physical (social) distancing, practice good hygiene, frequently wash hands with soap and water, and try to avoid close contact with friends or family members who work in areas where they may be exposed to the virus. Your provider will offer personalized instructions and detailed precautions you should take following your procedure.