

Your Lung Surgery

This handout offers information on your lung surgery. It is important you and your family member/partner-in-care read this handout as well as the “Your Guide to Surgery” booklet.

If your mass or tumour is cancer

Surgery may be the only treatment needed to manage your cancer. You may also need to have radiation and/or systemic therapy treatments. You will receive information about this if it applies to you. Deciding what treatments are right for you depends on:

- The cell type of your cancer
- The stage of your cancer
- Your age and overall health
- Your feelings about the treatment

Your healthcare team will provide you with the information and support needed to make the right choice of treatment.

Your healthcare team

The healthcare team members you may see in hospital:

Thoracic (Lung) Surgeon

Your surgeon decides what type of surgery you need and how it is done. The surgeon guides your care before, during and after your surgery.

Registered Nurse/ Registered Practical Nurse

Nurses care for you before and after surgery. They give you the support, medications and information you need while in hospital.

Social Worker

Social workers have training in counselling and can help you solve problems, make decisions and improve your feelings of wellbeing. A social worker offers support and information to help you and your family member/partner-in-care with your worries or concerns. Ask a member of your healthcare team about a referral to a social worker.

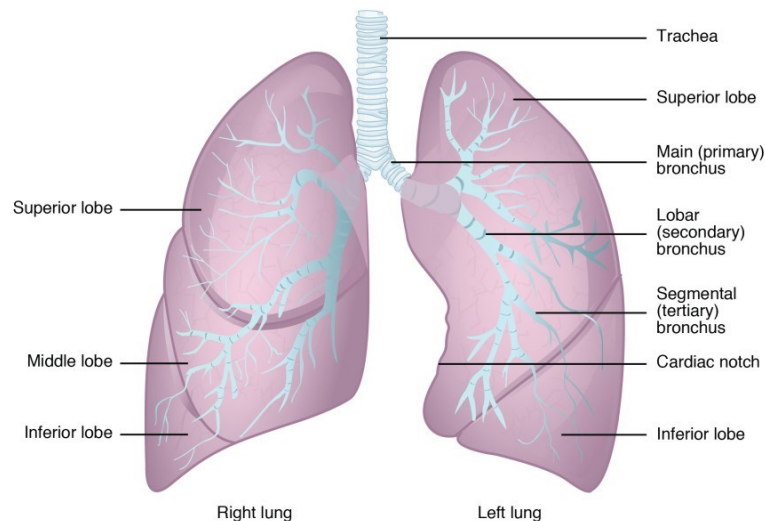
Registered Dietitian

Registered dietitians specialize in nutrition counselling and education. A registered dietitian is available to talk with you about what to eat and drink to help you recover from your surgery. Ask a member of your healthcare team about a referral to a registered dietitian.

Why you need lung surgery

You have 2 lungs. Your right lung has 3 lobes or parts. Your left lung has 2 lobes. You may need to have lung surgery because of an infection in your lungs or to remove a tumour. Your surgeon may need to take out an entire lung or sections from one or both of your lungs. A mass or tumour in your lung can be benign or malignant. Benign means that it is not a cancer and malignant means that it is a cancer. Any of your lung tissue removed during surgery is sent to the lab to be looked at.

A picture of what your lungs look like



Your appointments

You will be scheduled for a preoperative appointment and for surgery.

1. A preoperative appointment

You will be scheduled for this appointment before your surgery. You will receive more information about your surgery at this appointment. Your surgery may be cancelled or delayed if you miss this appointment.

A clerk from the Preoperative Department will call you with the date and time of this appointment.

Date of appointment: _____ Time of appointment: _____

Location: Day Surgery Department (2A) at Lakeridge Health Oshawa

You need to bring a list of the medications you take to this appointment. This includes all prescription, over the counter medications, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

2. Your surgery appointment

A clerk from the surgeon's office will call you with the date and time of your surgery.

Date of surgery: _____ Time of surgery: _____

Location: Day Surgery Department (2A) at Lakeridge Health Oshawa

Where to go for your preoperative and surgery appointments

- Enter the north entrance of Lakeridge Health Oshawa (on Hospital Court). Walk past the Gift Shop and Food Court.
- Take the escalator or elevator up to the 2nd floor and turn right into the hallway.
- Go to the Surgical Registration Desk to register for your appointment.

Preparing for your surgery

- If you take a blood thinning medication, you need to stop taking it before your surgery.

The name of your blood thinning medication: _____

Stop it: _____ days before your surgery.

Restart it: _____ days after your surgery. You will receive this information after your surgery.

- Plan to have someone drive you home after surgery. You cannot drive yourself home.
- Call the nurse navigator at your surgeon's office if you become sick with a cold before surgery.
- If possible, stop smoking (or reduce the amount you smoke) a few weeks before your surgery. This includes all tobacco products (pipes, cigars, cigarettes and chewing tobacco). Smoking puts you at risk for lung problems after surgery. Tobacco smoke destroys the tiny hairs that line your airway (cilia). Cilia help you cough up any secretions from your lungs. This is something you need to do after surgery to help you recover. Ask the nurse navigator about people and programs to help you quit smoking. You can also call Health Connect Ontario at 811 (a free, confidential telephone service).
- Do not eat anything after midnight the night before your surgery. Continue to drink clear fluids. This includes water, black coffee or tea (you may add sugar or sweetener but no milk or cream), sports drinks (no red or purple), carbonated drinks, pulp free fruit juices (no orange juice). Drinking clear fluids before surgery can help you stay hydrated, improve your blood pressure and decrease any nausea, vomiting, or anxiety after surgery.
- Stop drinking fluids 3 hours before the scheduled time of your surgery.
- Take your regular medications with a small sip of water (unless you were told something different at your preoperative appointment) no later than 3 hours before your surgery.

What you can expect after lung surgery

You will stay in hospital for a few days after your surgery. This depends on the type of surgery you have. You may stay in the Critical Care Unit (CCU) to be monitored for at least 1 day after surgery. You will be on the surgical unit (7th floor, G wing) for the rest of your hospital stay. Each person recovers differently. How you recover from surgery depends on the type of surgery you have, your age and your overall health.

Tubes and lines you may have after surgery

- **Intravenous Line (IV)**
An IV is inserted into one of the veins in your arm before surgery. The IV is used to give you fluids and medications. This IV is removed before you leave the hospital.
- **Arterial Line**
You may have an arterial line (a small tube) during your stay in the CCU. This is another type of IV used to monitor your blood pressure and to take samples of your blood.
- **Chest Tube**
A chest tube is a tube inserted through a small incision between your ribs and into the pleural space of your lung. A small suture (stitch) and tape holds the chest tube in place. Each chest tube is connected to a container. You may have 1 or 2 chest tubes in place to drain fluid, blood, and leaking air from your chest. This helps your lung refill with air. Chest tubes are usually taken out when the drainage of fluid, blood, and leaking air decreases or stops. The chest tube(s) may still be in place when you go home. If this applies to you, a visiting nurse from Ontario Health atHome (home care) will help you manage the chest tube(s) at home. After removal of the chest tube(s), you will have a chest x-ray. This allows the surgeon to see if your lungs are expanding well enough.
- **Foley Catheter**
A Foley catheter is inserted during your surgery and stays in for 1 to 2 days after surgery. A catheter is a hollow tube that is placed into your bladder to drain out your urine. The catheter is connected to a bag to collect the urine. Your nurse measures the amount of urine in the bag. This helps your healthcare team see how well your kidneys are working.

Managing pain

- You will have some pain (or discomfort) around your incisions. This may include feelings of numbness, tingling or burning.
- You will receive medication to help manage your pain. It is important to take this medication when you have pain. This helps you recover after surgery.

- Tell your healthcare team if your pain medication is not working.
- You may be given pain medication through an epidural catheter (a small flexible tube put in your back by a doctor) or through a Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA) Pump. You receive the information you need about this if it applies to you.
- You will continue to receive pain medications by mouth (a pill or tablet) after the epidural catheter or PCA pump is removed.

Side effects of pain medications

You may have side effects from pain medications. These side effects are expected and normal. They will not last long and can be managed. Tell your nurse if you have any of these side effects.

- Nausea and vomiting
- Constipation
- Headaches
- Sleepiness
- Itching

Managing constipation

- You may receive a mild laxative to help prevent you from having problems with constipation. Your bowels movements should return to what is normal for you after you stop taking pain medication.
- Drink 6 to 8 cups of fluids (1 cup = 250 ml) in 24 hours. Do this unless your surgeon or a dietitian tells you something different.
- Add bran, high fibre breads, cereals, berries, and dried fruit or prune juice to your diet (unless these foods are a problem for you normally).
- Talk to a member of your healthcare team if you have problems with constipation and do not have a bowel movement for 3 days.

Your incision(s)

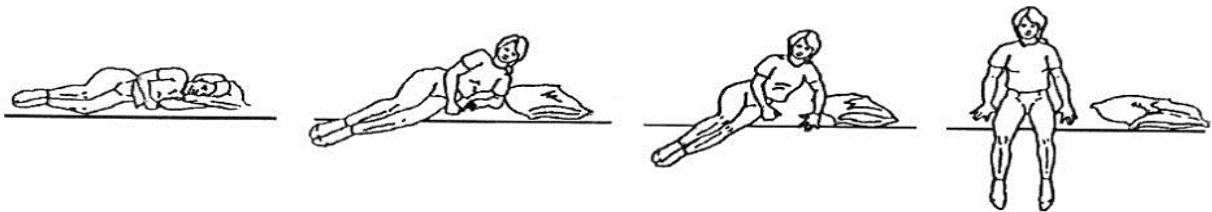
- Your surgeon will tell you where and how big your incision(s) will be. The size and location of your incision(s) depends on the type of surgery you have.
- The area around your incision(s) may feel numb. This is normal. It may last for 2 to 3 months or may never go away.
- Your incision(s) may be closed with sutures (stitches) or staples. The surgeon will tell you when these need to be removed.
- Small white strips of tape (example: Steri-strips™) may cover your incision. If they do not fall off after 10 days, remove them when you have a shower. It is normal for the Steri-strips™ to fall off before this.
- Do not put lotions or creams on your incision(s) until it is completely healed.

Your breathing

- Your oxygen levels will be monitored by the healthcare team during your hospital stay.
- You may need to receive oxygen through a face mask or nasal prongs (into your nose) for a few days after surgery. The oxygen will be removed when your oxygen levels are stable (staying within the normal range).
- You may have shortness of breath after surgery. As you recover it is important your lungs expand and for you to cough up any mucous. Managing your pain, getting out of bed after surgery and deep breathing and coughing exercises help with this. You will be shown how to do deep breathing and coughing exercises every 4 hours while you are awake.

Getting out of bed after surgery

- Your healthcare team helps you sit at the side of the bed for the first time. It will not be easy or comfortable for you to sit up without help.
- These steps help you sit up after surgery (see the pictures below):
 - Roll onto your side where there is no incision.
 - Put your upper hand on the bed below your elbow on your other arm.
 - Lift your upper body off the bed by pushing down on the bed with your upper hand and pushing up with your elbow
 - Swing your feet and legs over the edge of the bed and bring your body to a sitting position.



Eating and drinking after surgery

- Drink 6 to 8 cups (1 cup = 250 ml) of fluid every 24 hours unless your doctor or registered dietitian tells you something different.
- You can eat your normal diet after you manage to drink fluids well.
- Your appetite should return to normal within a few weeks.
- Your appetite will get better as your physical activity increases.
- Ask to see a registered dietitian if you have problems eating after surgery.
- Eat smaller meals more often if you do not feel hungry.
- Eat foods that are high in protein and calories.

Your emotions after surgery

- After surgery you may feel tired and discouraged for days or weeks. You will feel better emotionally as you feel stronger physically.
- Talk to a member of your healthcare team or ask to see a social worker if you have concerns about your emotions.

Your medications after surgery

The surgeon may make some changes to the medications you currently take. Ask a member of your healthcare team about this.

You will receive a handout called “Going Home After Your Thoracic Surgery” when you are ready to leave the hospital. This handout offers information on how to manage your care when you go home. It is important you and your family member/partner-in-care read this handout. For more information or to find this handout, go to the Cancer Care pages of the Lakeridge Health website at lakeridgehealth.on.ca. Click on Our Services, then click on Diagnosis, then click on Thoracic DAP.

Your follow-up appointment

Your follow-up appointment is scheduled for 2 to 4 weeks after your surgery. Call your surgeon’s office to schedule a follow up appointment if you did not receive it before leaving the hospital. Make this call the day after you leave the hospital. The surgeon explains the results of your surgery and the plan for the next steps in your care at this appointment.

- ☐ Dr. Browne at 905-576-8711 or 1-866-338-1778 at 32383
- ☐ Dr. Dickie at 905-576-8711 or 1-866-338-1778 at extension 36357
- ☐ Dr. Sisson at 905-576-8711 or 1-866-338-1778 at extension 36342
- ☐ Dr. Trainor at 905-576-8711 or 1-866-338-1778 extension 34481

Talk to a member of your healthcare team if you have questions or do not understand any information in this handout.