

# Virginia Neurosurgeons

RICHARD D. MURRAY, MD | NIKHIL R. NAYAK, MD | MATTHEW PIAZZA, MD

## Pre-Operative Patient Instructions

**Thank you for scheduling surgery with Virginia Neurosurgeons! Please read through entirety of these instructions.**

### **Surgery Cancellation Policy:**

Please keep in mind, Surgeries canceled within 14 days of surgery date are subject to a \$500 cancellation fee

### **Pre-Op Requirements:**

**Before your surgery, you may be asked to do the following:**

#### **All patients:**

- Type & screen
- Pre-op appointment with NP (Nurse Practitioner)
- History & Physical (with PCP or can be done during Pre-op appointment with NP)
- Imaging (all requested imaging must be done/ CD physically given to our office prior to surgery)

#### **Additional testing if over 50-years-old/ or preexisting health conditions:**

- Medical clearance by primary care physician (PCP)
- EKG
- Pre-op blood work/labs
- Chest x-ray
- Cardiac clearance by cardiologist (if you have a history of cardiac issues)

Please see your attached pre-op order for what is required before your surgery specifically. Fax all medical clearance results to (703) 248-0046. It is the patient's responsibility to make sure all of the testing has been completed prior to your scheduled surgery and sent to our office. **Please try and have your results 1 week prior to your surgery**, if results are not in on time your surgery may be canceled. So, please ensure that your testing is completed and received in a timely manner.

Please see below for surgery testing, you must get testing within x number of months before the surgery:

- Medical clearances (2 months)
- Labs (3 months)
- Chest x-rays and EKG'S (6 months)

If any of the above testing was performed and is within the time limit expiration, the tests can be used and do not have to be repeated unless otherwise requested by your Primary Care Physician.

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## Pre-Operative Imaging

**Cranial surgery:** If you are having brain surgery, you will be asked to get additional navigation imaging prior to surgery. Please ensure you have this imaging completed one week prior to surgery. You must physically bring a CD to our office at least 72 hours prior to surgery or your surgery will be canceled.

**Spinal surgery:** If you are asked to get additional imaging, you must physically bring a CD to our office at least 72 hours prior to surgery.

**WE MUST PHYSICALLY RECEIVE IMAGING CD'S PRIOR TO SURGERY**

## Pre-Operative Screening Department (Type and Screen)

The Pre-operative Screening Department at Virginia Hospital Center will contact you a day or two before surgery to schedule a phone interview. Please note, the pre-operative screening department is not open on weekends or Holidays. If your surgery is on a Monday, you will need to come in the Friday before.

During your type and screen, you will get a blood typing and blood screening. If you are having inpatient surgery, you will get a Covid test. Additionally, if you are over the age of 50, you will get a chest x-ray at this time (unless you have kaiser insurance). Your type and screen will be set up ahead of time for you. Please refer to the instructions email for the date of your type and screen.

**You will need to come to Virginia Hospital Center Pre-Operative Screening Department within 48 hours of your procedure to get a Type and Screen. No appointment is necessary and you may walk in in-between 8:30AM to 2PM.**

**Do not take of your wristband after your type and screen. It will need to remain on for your surgery**

## **Directions:**

The Pre-operative Screening Department is located in Zone A, lobby floor, of the Virginia Hospital center (same zone as our office). It is directly behind the Starbucks, and says "Admissions" at the top.

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## Pre-op information:

### Surgery Scheduling

The surgery time is based off the availability of the operating room and the surgeon. You will be given a time within 48 hours of your scheduled surgery date. However, because of the nature of spine/brain surgery, **there may be occasions when an emergency case may need to replace/move a scheduled elective case.** We apologize in advance for any difficulties this may cause.

### Time off work

- You should contact your surgical team to discuss when you will be able to return to work after surgery, as different surgeries require different recovery periods.
- The office can provide for short-term disability up to 12 weeks after surgery. Any additional time off will need to be determined by your primary care physician or referring provider.
- Please note, there is a \$15 letter fee, \$35 form fee. There is also a free form we provide to patients for time off work, return to work, and restrictions on our letter head if needed.
- The surgical office can complete the Family Medical Leave Act/Short-Term Disability paperwork per request. Please note there is a 7–10 business day turnaround time from when we receive the forms. We can return forms within 3 days of the surgery date, no earlier.

### Billing

Please familiarize yourself with your insurance benefits. You are required to pay your upfront costs **prior to your surgery date.** Please contact the office within one week of surgery to pay your estimate. Our office will bill for our professional charges only. The hospital, anesthesia, and Neuromonitoring, if applicable, will all bill separately. Please reach out to the following contacts if you have questions.

Billing Contacts:

Virginia Neurosurgeons 703-248-0111 option 3  
Anesthesia (Dominion Anesthesia) 1-888-276-1910  
Hospital (VHC Billing) 1-703-558-6391  
Neuromonitoring 1-800-348-4565

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## Medication Instructions

**Please contact your prescribing doctor for instructions on stopping prescription medications prior to surgery.**

**Please hold all supplements 7 days prior to surgery.**

***Blood-thinning medications: should be held for 7 days prior to surgery.***

These medications include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Aspirin** and anti-platelet medication (Aspirin, Plavix, Anacin, Bufferin, Bayer, etc.)
- **Anticoagulants** (Coumadin, warfarin, Eliquis, Pradaxa, Xarelto, etc.)
- **Drugs that contain aspirin** (Alka Seltzer, Anaprox, Ascriptin, Coricidin, Darvon, Dristan, Duragesic, Ecotrin, **Excedrin**, Fiorinal, Midol, Percodan, Sine-off, Triaminicin, Vanquish)
- **NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatories)** (**Advil**, **Aleve**, Cataflam, Clinoril, Diclofenac, Dolobid, Feldene, **Ibuprofen**, Indocin, Medipren, **Mobic**, **Motrin**, Nalfon, **Naprosyn**, Nuprin, **Relafen**, Rufen, Tolectin, **Toradol**, Trilisate, Voltaren)
- **Other medications or supplements that may cause bleeding** (Vitamin E, Fish Oil, St. John's Wort, Gingko Biloba)

**You may take Tylenol and/or acetaminophen-containing products.**

***Diabetes medications:*** If you are diabetic, and take either insulin or pills to control your diabetes, you must be given special instructions on when to hold these medications. Please discuss with the doctor who prescribes these medications prior to your surgery date to determine the best plan for holding these medications the morning of surgery.

***Rheumatoid medications:*** If you take medications for rheumatoid arthritis or lupus, these medications should be held at least one week prior to surgery. This should be discussed with the doctor who prescribes these medications.

***Blood Pressure or Thyroid Medications:*** If you are taking a medication for blood pressure or thyroid, please ask your prescribing doctor what to take the day before and day of surgery. We suggest you stop taking ACE-inhibitors, e.g., lisinopril, ramipril or agents ending with “-pril,” as well as ARBs, such as losartan, valsartan and meds ending with “-sartan,” on the day before surgery (24 hours before).

- You may ask questions about your medications during your pre-op appointment with the Nurse Practitioner

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## 7 Days before Surgery:

- We recommend that you shower with the antibacterial soap agent called chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG) starting 3 days prior to surgery. Common names for this soap are Hibiclens<sup>®</sup>, Betasept<sup>®</sup> or Exidine<sup>®</sup>, but any brand with four percent chlorhexidine gluconate is acceptable.
- Ensure that our office has received all pre-op testing results/imaging
- Discontinue all blood-thinning medications
- **ENSURE OUR OFFICE HAS CD'S OF ALL UPDATED IMAGING**

## The Night before Surgery:

- Please take a thorough shower the night before surgery, including using antibacterial soap on your hair and your entire body. If you are not scheduled to be the first surgery of the day, you may take a shower the morning of surgery. \*If having brain surgery, please do not use conditioner after the soap.

### **Do not have ANYTHING to eat or drink after 11:59 PM the night before surgery.**

- This includes gum, mints, candy, and any tobacco/nicotine products. You may brush your teeth, but do not swallow any water.
- If you were instructed to take any medications the day of surgery, you may take them with a sip of water.

**\*FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS MAY RESULT IN CANCELATION\***

## Day of Surgery:

### **What to Bring**

- Pack lightly and wear loose, comfortable clothes (recommended to wear button up clothing). Bring a case for any glasses, dentures, or hearing aids that you are bringing to the hospital.
- Do not bring ANY money, jewelry, or valuables with you to the hospital.
- If you wear a wedding band, you will be asked to remove it prior to going to surgery, and therefore may want to leave it at home.
- Bring any essential medications in the original bottles. While most medications are available through the hospital pharmacy, some specialized medications may require you to bring your own supply.

### **Time to Arrive**

You will receive a call the day before your procedure informing you of your arrival time. Patients are asked to arrive for their surgery 2 hours prior to. Please make arrangements to

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accommodate both an early and late arrival. Report-time is not your surgery start time; your surgery will begin after you have checked-in and the operating room is ready for you. The time of your surgery is subject to change due to OR availability.

## **Where to Arrive**

Address: 1625 N. George Mason Drive, Arlington VA 22205

Parking: You may park in **Zone A parking garage, (blue signs)**. There is a \$5 flat fee for the parking garage. If you are getting dropped off, you may walk in through the **main lobby doors**.

Report to **Zone A 2<sup>nd</sup> floor/Outpatient Surgery** area, when you arrive at the hospital the day of your surgery. Take **elevators A** up to the **2<sup>nd</sup> floor**. Turn left out of the elevators and you will see the check in/waiting area down the hall on your right.

## **After Surgery:**

### **Discharge Preparation**

- You will be given advanced notice of your discharge date by the neurosurgery team or medical hospitalist. In addition, you will receive written discharge instructions specific to your surgery.
- Please have a designated person to pick you up or escort you home. **You must have a responsible adult to accompany you on the day you are discharged.** If you are planning to take public transportation or a private car (cab, Uber, Lyft, etc.), the driver cannot be considered your escort. Failure to have a responsible adult to accompany you home can result in cancellation of your surgery (if outpatient) or delay of your discharge.

### **Post-operative Appointments**

- Your post-operative appointments will be scheduled for you prior to surgery

**Cranial surgeries:** Your first post-op appointment will be within 7-10 days of surgery with the Nurse Practitioner (NP). Your second post-op appointment will be within 4-6 weeks of surgery with your Surgeon. After that point, your appointments will alternate between the NP and Surgeon.

**Spinal Surgeries:** Your first post-op appointment will be within 7-14 days of surgery with the Nurse Practitioner (NP). Your second post-op appointment will be within 6-8 weeks of surgery with your Surgeon. After that point, your appointments will alternate between the NP and Surgeon.

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## Medication refills

- Most patients will be discharged with a pain medication prescription to help relieve post-surgical pain. It is your responsibility to discuss pain medication refills and expectations with your surgical team before your surgery. The office requires 2 business days to process prescription refills.
- **Our office will only prescribe pain medication for up to 8 weeks after surgery.**
- If your medications are not controlling your post-operative pain, please contact your surgeon's office to discuss treatment options. If there are issues managing your pain after your surgery, you may be asked to see a pain specialist.

## Miscellaneous reminders

- If you had cervical or lumbar fusion surgery, you should not take non-steroidal medications such as ibuprofen, Aleve, Naprosyn, Motrin, Advil, etc., until your surgeon tells you. In most cases, these medications can be resumed 12 weeks after surgery. If you did not have a cervical or lumbar fusion, you may resume the above medications approximately 10 days after surgery.
- Undergoing surgery is a stressful experience, and it is important to have support during this time. Please reach out to your primary care doctor if you feel the need for additional help or support.

**If you should have any questions on any of the information provided, please contact Annie Scott - Surgical Coordinator at (703) 248-0111 option 4 or [ascott@vaneurosurgeons.com](mailto:ascott@vaneurosurgeons.com). If you have an urgent request or non-surgical questions, please call the front to discuss this matter. It may take a few business days for me to respond to requests.**