



Printable Surgery Recovery Planning Checklist

1.What kind of help will I need immediately after surgery?

- Will I be able to walk, shower, or use the bathroom on my own?

- Will I need help dressing, cooking, cleaning, or doing basic tasks?

- How soon after surgery will I be able to work?

2.How long will I need help at home?

- How many days or weeks of limited mobility or assistance are expected?

- Is there a typical timeline for recovery milestones?

3.What medications will I need post-surgery?

- Will I be on strong pain meds that affect my alertness or mobility?

- If so, for how long?

- Will I need someone to help me organize and remember to take the medications I will be prescribed?

4. Will I need follow-up appointments or wound care?

- Do I need someone to drive me to appointments?

- Will I need help changing bandages or monitoring for infection?

- What kind of bandages do I need to get?

- Should I clean my wound, or just replace the bandage?

- How long should I wear a bandage for?

- When can I get water on my wound?

- How long do staples/stitches stay in?

5. What are the red flags during recovery — and what should I do if I'm alone?

- What signs of complications should I watch for?

- Who should I call if I experience issues and I'm home alone?

6.Can I arrange a hospital stay extension or short-term rehab stay if I have no support at all at home?

- Is it possible to stay in the hospital post-surgery if I don't have support?

- Are there local convalescent care homes or short-term rehab options?

7.What kind of equipment might I need at home?

- Will I need a cryotherapy device, crutches, a brace, a walker, a raised toilet seat, or shower chair?

- Can I get these ahead of time, and if so, where?

8.What can I do before surgery (if possible) to make recovery easier?

- Should I prep meals, move furniture, or set up a recovery station?

- Are there exercises I can do now to speed up recovery later?

9.Who can I contact if I need extra help after I'm home?

- Can the hospital connect me with home care services?

- Are there publicly funded or low-cost supports for people recovering alone?

10.What’s the best way to communicate with my care team from home?

- Will anyone follow up with me after my surgery?

- Will there be a nurse hotline or email for follow-up questions that I have as they arise?

- Should I schedule a check-in call in case I can’t easily leave the house?