

IN HEALTH NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE
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Preparations for Surgery

Any surgery is a stress for the body and it takes time for the healing to occur. The following program of diet, supplements, herbal and botanical remedies will help to strengthen and nourish your body before and after surgery. This will promote a rapid recovery and minimize the possibility of infections and other complications. In addition to the physical work you will do, your mental attitude towards yourself, the surgery, and your surgeon all play an important role in the outcome of surgical procedures.

Therefore, it is important to:

- 1) Build good rapport with your surgeon. It is important to have clear communication with your surgeon. Ask questions and get clarification on anything you don't understand. Come to expect the very best result from your surgery.
- 2) Develop a positive attitude toward your surgery by addressing any fears and negative thoughts.
- 3) Get as much rest as possible before the surgery and allow yourself plenty of time to rest after the surgery. It takes time to heal, so don't rush yourself.

PREPARATION

1) 3 to 4 weeks prior to surgery:

To Increase Wound Healing:

- *Zinc*: 50mg a day (may be provided in multiple vitamin—see below)
- *Copper*: 3mg a day (may be provided in multiple vitamin also)
- *Vitamin C*: 10-15 grams as day. (Work up to bowel tolerance- when the bowels become loose, back off by 1 gram until they become normal)
- *Vitamin A (Beta-Carotene)*: 50,000 IU a day

To Strengthen the Body:

- A good *multiple vitamin* which will provide at least a portion of the above plus other vital trace minerals and vitamins. Six tablets a day, in divided doses, of a good multiple vitamin is recommended.
- The vitamin should supply 20,000 IU of Vitamin A, 45mg of Zinc, 3mg of Copper and 400 IU of *Vitamin E*, per day.

2) 2 weeks before surgery:

- Include high quality protein (i.e. eggs, poultry, fish, or soy) in your diet at least once daily.
- Continue with supplements listed above.

3) During the week before surgery:

- Slowly reduce the multiple vitamin until it is discontinued the day prior to surgery.
- Slowly cut down on the amount of protein that you are taking in to reduce the workload of the gastrointestinal tract.
- Slowly reduce the amount of vitamin C from 10-15 grams to between 3-5 grams a day. Reduce intake by 3 grams per day.
- Continue with zinc, copper, and vitamin A up to the day before the surgery.
- Begin taking *Immune Support*:
Botanical Tincture: Echinacea (4 drams), Hydrastis (2 drams), Myrrh (2 drams), Capsicum (15 drops) 20 drops 3 times a day -or-
Echinacea Vitamin C -or- Super BioVegetarian
- Homeopathy:
If at this time you feel particularly anxious or fearful of the operation then start taking homeopathic *Gelsemium 30c* once a day, before bed, until the day before the surgery.
- Diet Recommendations for the week before surgery: (Particularly important for those having abdominal surgery): Do a 3 day bowel cleansing diet and a 3 day transition diet.

4) The day before surgery:

- Homeopathy:
Phosphorus 30c: 1 dose (2 pellets) before bed to help prevent hemorrhage.
Arnica 30c: 1 dose (2 pellets) 3 times in the 12 hours preceding the surgery to increase wound healing.
- Diet recommendations: follow diet recommendations of your surgeon. If no diet recommendations were given, consume a liquid diet with clear broths and fresh vegetable juices.

5) The day of surgery:

- Diet will depend upon the recommendation of surgeon. If nothing is specified then stay with vegetable and fruit juices throughout day.
- Do not take any supplements in the 12 hours before the surgery.
- Homeopathy:
Arnica 30c: 1 dose (2 pellets) in the morning before surgery.
Phosphorus 30c: 1 dose (2 pellets) in the morning before surgery.

Post Surgical Recommendations:

1) The day after surgery:

- Homeopathy:
Arnica 30c: 4 doses (2 pellets each dose) during the first 24 hours to hasten wound healing and reduce the risk of hemorrhage and infection.
- Diet: Drink water or a liquid diet for at least 24 hours or until all nausea has passed and your hunger returns.

2) Day 2 post-surgery and beyond:

- Begin a transition diet for 2-3 days (the same as the earlier pre-surgery period). As soon as simple foods are tolerated well, add protein to your diet twice daily. Start taking the Echinacea, Hydrastis, Myrrh, and Capsicum tincture in between meals at 20 drops, 3 times a day for 1 week. –or- Echinacea Vitamin C –or- Super BioVegetarian
- The supplements began before surgery may be resumed as soon as you feel capable of taking pills/powder. Continue for two to four weeks following surgery.

Special Considerations for Abdominal Surgery:

Abdominal Surgery often results in the gastrointestinal symptoms of constipation, gas, bloating and pain. The following suggestions may help alleviate these problems:

- *1 Week before surgery:* Garlic capsules: 1 capsule 3 times a day to help stimulate the intestinal mucosa. Discontinue the day before surgery.
- *Day 1 after surgery:* China 30c, 4 doses (2 pellets each dose) in the first 24 hours. Take if there is great weakness or abdominal distention. Alternate with the Arnica 30c, 4 doses (2 pellets each dose) in the first 24 hours.
- *Day 3 after surgery:* Garlic capsules may be restarted on the second day after the surgery if you feel ready to start taking pills again.

Special Considerations for Breast Reconstruction Surgery:

- For breast reconstruction surgery where an implant is inserted, take 400-600 IU of vitamin E with food each day for one year to help prevent post-operational spherical contractures around the implant.

If you have any questions or problems regarding you surgery, contact your surgeon. If you have any questions regarding adjunctive therapy pre or post surgery, contact your naturopathic physician.