

# DILATION AND CURETTAGE

## Preparing for your D&C

It is very important to follow the instructions provided to you by your physician and nurses regarding preparation during the days leading up to your dilation and curettage. You may put yourself at risk for complications or cancellation of your procedure if the instructions are not followed correctly.

*Pre-Op:* A few days prior to your D&C, you will meet with your surgeon to make sure that you are able to safely undergo surgery and receive anesthesia. A nurse will be discussing any medications you will need to take before and after your procedure. You will also be given a time to arrive and information about LJWSC. You will need to fill out various forms including your surgical consent and a Pre-Anesthesia Questionnaire at this appointment (see the Pre-Op forms tab for a copy of this document). A nurse from the surgery center will also be contacting you the day before your procedure to give you additional information as well as answer any questions you may have.

*Medications:* If you are taking any medications, you will be instructed which meds to discontinue and which meds you will need to continue through the day of your surgery. You should inform the surgery center RN which meds you have taken in the past 6 months and any meds you were asked to take on the day of your procedure. Please ask your MD if you are unsure what medications you should continue to take.

*Pre-Operative Fasting:* A pre-op RN will call you one day prior to surgery procedure to discuss refraining from eating and drinking at least 8 hours prior to your surgery. The restriction is enforced to prevent any undigested food or fluids from moving up into your mouth and getting into your airway while you are under anesthesia. This aspiration can cause serious damage to your lungs and severe complications during your surgery. Please follow the instructions given by your nurse regarding when you will need to stop eating and drinking. Your surgery may be cancelled if you do not comply with these directions.

*General Health:* It is important that you are in good general health before receiving anesthesia. Please inform the pre-op nurse or anesthesia provider if you have experienced any cold or flu symptoms in the days leading up to your surgery.

## The Day of Your D&C

The day of surgery can be stressful for some people. It is normal to feel some anxiety and nervousness prior to your procedure. Spend a little bit of time preparing for the day of surgery so you can limit any anxiety. It is important to know where you are going, what time you will need to be there, and bring any important items with you (picture ID, socks, etc.).

*Arrival:* You will be asked to arrive 30 minutes prior to your procedure to meet with a pre-op nurse, your anesthesia provider, and surgeon. It is very important that you come at the correct time in order to ensure that your case is not delayed. You should contact our center immediately if you are running late. Please have a valid form of **identification** with you (i.e. Drivers License, Passport, Military ID) the day of your surgery and present it to our staff upon arrival.

*Transportation:* You are required to have a **ride home** after receiving anesthesia. Your ride does not have to stay at the surgery center while you are having your procedure but must arrive prior to your discharge to receive your discharge instructions and drive you home. The average length of stay is 2-4 hours. You must have someone available to be with you for 24 hours after your procedure for your safety.

*Cleansing:* You will be able to bathe the morning of your dilation and curettage but should avoid wearing lotion, heavy make-up, or any jewelry to your surgery. If you choose to wash your hair, please make sure that it is dry when you arrive so that we can keep you as warm as possible while you are in surgery.

*Clothing:* Please wear warm, comfortable clothing to your surgery. You will be asked to change into proper surgical attire at the time of your pre-op. You may be allowed to leave your bra and a **pair of socks** on in the OR. Your remaining belongings will be kept in a secure area and returned to you prior to discharge.

*Medications:* If there are any oral medications that you were told by your MD to take on the morning of surgery (i.e., blood pressure meds, neuro meds, cardiac meds) you may do so with a minimal sip of water. Remember that you will **not be allowed to eat or drink anything at least 8 hours prior to your procedure** so consult with your physician if you have any medications that you need to take with food.

*Contact lenses:* If you wear contact lenses, please remove them and wear glasses to your procedure. You will be able to wear your glasses into the OR for your safety if necessary. You may also choose to bring a case and remove your contact lenses before your surgery if needed.

*Restroom Use:* For visualization purposes, we prefer that you DO NOT have an empty bladder. Please try to avoid using the restroom at least 1 hour prior to your procedure. You will then be required to void after your procedure in order to meet discharge criteria.

*Anesthesia Administration:* The anesthesia medications that you will receive will be given intravenously. An IV will be started in the OR. It is helpful to inform the Anesthesia provider if you have had difficulty with previous IV insertion or blood draws in the past. The type of anesthesia you will receive is called Monitored Anesthesia Care which is an intravenous sedation. You will not have general anesthesia for this procedure.

## **Following Your D&C**

After your surgery, it is common to feel sleepy and possibly experience mild pain, nausea, and slight dizziness. It is important to not schedule any business or social activity directly following your procedure to give yourself time to rest completely. Most patients tend to feel fine the day after their procedure and are able to go back to work but it may take a couple days for you to feel better and it is important to take it easy until you feel ready.

*Accompaniment:* A responsible adult must be available to drive you home and stay with you for 24 hours after your surgery.

*Activity:* Limit your activities as directed by your physician. No heavy lifting or straining. Use caution when using stairs. You will not be allowed to drive or operate any machinery for 24 hours after your surgery due to the anesthesia medications you will be given.

*Pain:* It is very normal to have mild to moderate cramping following your surgery. You will be instructed to take Ibuprofen or Extra Strength Acetaminophen (Tylenol) by mouth every 6 hours as needed for pain control. If your pain is not relieved by Tylenol, you may be prescribed a stronger medication and should follow the administration directions carefully.

*Unusual Symptoms:* It is recommended that you call your doctor if you are experiencing any unusual symptoms including: severe nausea and vomiting, persistent and severe pain not relieved by medication, excessive bleeding that is saturating more than 1 pad per hour, foul smelling or off color vaginal discharge, fever over 100 degrees, prolonged bleeding (over 2 weeks), or prolonged cramping (over 2 weeks). You can contact someone @ 858-552-9177 (main number) or 858-793-3852 (Physician on call) regarding any urgency.

*Restrictions:* Please refrain from the following for the 2 weeks after your D&C: DO NOT have sexual intercourse, DO NOT use tampons or douche, and NO vigorous exercise.

*Bleeding:* You can expect to have some spotting or minor bleeding following your D&C. This bleeding usually lasts about 3 days following the procedure. Please inform your MD if you are experiencing moderate or heavy bleeding or bleeding that persists longer than 2 weeks following your surgery.

*Diet:* You will be allowed to eat and drink shortly after your procedure. Keep your diet light (avoid greasy and spicy foods). We encourage you to drink plenty of fluids following your surgery. You may not drink alcoholic beverages for 24 hours after your procedure.

*Medications:* A nurse will review any post-operative medications with your ride and you. Please be sure you understand what you will be taking and when if applicable.

*Follow Up:* You will be receiving a call from our surgery center 1-2 days after your surgery to see how you are recovering. It is important that we are able to get a hold of you to ensure your safety. Your surgeon may want to see you for a follow up visit 1-2 weeks after your surgery. Your recovery room nurse will give you information regarding scheduling this appointment.