

Preparing for Your Surgery

- Set a firm date for your surgery with Dr. Bowers
- Arrange for your Letters of Recommendation, which should be forwarded directly to Dr. Bowers prior to your surgery: one from a Psychiatrist or Ph D in Psychology.
You need two letters. Due to hospital and insurance requirements, this is not negotiable.
- Continue facial hair removal and hormone therapy
- Stay in shape! Your recovery will be faster if you are healthy and not overweight. The 210 pound restriction is generally not waived unless a person is very fit / athletic / tall.
- If you smoke, QUIT
- Consider taking a multivitamin and optimizing vitamin C (citrus) intake for ideal tissue healing
- At least 3 laser sessions, or five electrolysis sessions are recommended prior to surgery although these should NOT be within 2 weeks of surgery. DO NOT go above the shaft or out to the thighs...hair is wonderful cover-up for scarring which, however minimal, will be present.

The Month Before Your Surgery

- Reduce your estrogen dosage (to 2 mg Estradiol or 0.625mg Premarin) **two weeks** prior to surgery. **At the same time, stop Progesterone, Anti-androgens, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, herbal supplements, blood thinners. YOU MUST STOP ANY BLOOD THINNING PRODUCTS** If you are taking **any** additional medications or have **any** doubts call Robin for instructions.
- Consult with your endocrinologist/physician to inform her/him about your surgery, your reduction in medications, and your post-surgical hormone regimen (this will be strongly influenced by Dr. Bowers before your departure),
- Arrange a visit with your primary care physician for two or three weeks after your surgery. Our office is happy to answer any questions you have about healing, dilation, etc., but you will need to find a local doctor. Dr. Bowers is very happy to speak to him/her regarding your specific case.
- If you are over 40 provide us with a copy of an EKG performed within 30 days of your scheduled surgery. We must receive this in our office no later than 3 weeks prior to surgery.
- Please do not wear nail polish or artificial nails on the day of your surgery. Please do not wear makeup on the day of your surgery.
- Send your surgical fees to Dr. Bowers, the hospital, and the anesthesia group absolutely no later than 14 days prior to surgery. We recommend FedEx, UPS, Priority Mail or some other method that you can track and insure. Call if you have not received notice of final amounts.
- Review the information packet you have received by Robin for the date and time of your pre-surgery visit.

Travel Arrangements

- Plan to arrive two-three days before your surgery. You will need to be in Dr. Bowers' office one-two days prior to surgery, depending on your surgery date.
- You can expect to be discharged on the 3rd day following your date of surgery. You will spend three nights after your release at The Post Op Recovery Place. This is included in your surgical fees. Our office can help coordinate your transfer to the house, pharmacy, etc.
- Stay two extra days in the area after your release from the Recovery House in case of complications, and to give yourself some recovery time before you travel home. Total time in California should be 10-14 days.
- Arrange for a hotel for yourself (before and after your hospital and Recovery House stay) as well as for anyone accompanying you for your surgery. Hotel Information can be found in your surgery packet. You can also check the website as we build our hotel list.
- Arrange for flights (advance tickets may be less expensive!) You should fly into San Francisco International Airport (SFO).
- Consider how you will get from the airport to your hotel. Most hotels offer free shuttle service to and from the airport. You will need to take a taxi to your pre-surgery visit and to the hospital. Someone from the Recovery House will pick you up from the hospital and take you to the Recovery House, and also take you back to the Dr. Bowers' office for your post surgery visit on the 6th day after surgery.

When You Arrive in San Mateo

- Confirm your previously scheduled, pre-surgery appointment, and let us know you are in town, by calling (650) 570-6066 or (877) 439-2244. If you call outside of business hours, just leave a message to let us know you're here.
- A prescription for bowel prep will be called into a local pharmacy, and you must get it filled on the day prior to surgery. Do not make big plans for the day before surgery – you'll want to stick close to a bathroom once you drink the bowel prep.
- Clear liquids ONLY on the day prior to surgery. **Do not have breakfast or any solid foods throughout the day.** You can view a list of acceptable clear liquids here: <http://www.marcibowers.com/grs/surgery3b.html>. Nothing to eat or drink after midnight, please!
- Remember to discuss your medications with Dr. Bowers so that she can work with you to phase these in after your surgery

Things to Bring to California: Medical

- The hospital provides a set of high quality, graduated stents with a slight curve for dilation. There should be no reason to buy your own unless you really want something special.
- Lubricant for Dilation:
KY Jelly is the classic but it can get expensive. **Surgilube** is a bit messier, but lower cost, and used by most patients.
- Thin Maxi Pads (will need 4-6 per day once you check out of the hospital)
- An inflatable or foam donut for the trip home. Some patients find that a horseshoe-shaped neck pillow (available in airports or at other stores) is ideal; it can be adjusted to fit your shape, and can be used for its intended purpose after surgery!
- Bed pads to protect sheets in the hotel and Recovery House. You can get disposable ones.
- A small hand mirror (will help with dilation until you get used to where things are)
- Your hormones and other medications (you will continue taking these after your surgery), per your endocrinologist's and Dr. Bowers' recommendations. Be sure to bring your medications in the original bottles. They may be given to you by the hospital staff.
- A support bra (if you are having a breast augmentation) - you will get one at the hospital, but it will get soiled. Some of our patients have recommended the Yesmina Front Zippered Medical Bra. You can find it on the website www.makemeheal.com

Things to Bring: Boredom Suppressants

- Stamps and Stationery if you want to write some letters
- CD Player, DVD Player, Laptop, etc. as well as media. Bring headphones so you do not bother other patients. A good book or two. Keep it light, you may not be able to focus or concentrate as well as you are used to while on pain medication
- Magazines (probably better suited to your limited attention span and the frequent interruptions of hospital life)
- Bring your address book or PDA so you can contact your friends and family.
- Bring spare batteries or chargers for electronic devices
- If you don't have a cell phone, consider buying a phone card or making sure you have a calling card for making long distance phone calls from the hospital
- A camera (we're all so photogenic!)

Things to Bring to California: Personal

- Clothes (you will not need much for the hospital, but plan loose and comfortable outfits for after your release)
- Make-up and Toiletries

Bring A Little Cash

While your surgery fees are generally inclusive of most medical expenses, plan to bring some money to San Mateo for the following:

- Snacks, the gift-shop, comfort food, etc.
- San Mateo and the surrounding areas really have some cute and unique places to shop for a memento of your visit or gifts for friends and loved ones who put up with your pre-surgical freaking out.
- Plan on spending about \$100 - \$150 for prescriptions upon your release. (Metrogel, antibiotics, and pain meds). You can pick these up at a local pharmacy. Bring along any insurance cards, although you may need to pay for the meds and submit the bills for payment.
- You will need to pick up your bowel prep at a local pharmacy
- Plan enough money for meals and hotels on any days you are staying before or after your surgery.

Things to Have Pre-purchased for When You Return Home

- Lubricant for Dilation - you will need LOTS of this – consider getting a few boxes from a surgical supply shop ahead of time. Buying this in single tube quantities at your local drugstore will be expensive
- Neosporin, Triple antibiotic, or A&D Ointment. You may need 1-2 tubes which you will apply to suture areas while you are healing.
- Thin Maxi pads to protect your underwear and clothes
- Panty liners to protect your underwear once you no longer need the maxi pads
- Anti-bacterial soap to clean stents and hands before dilating *any soap will do....*
- Soft toilet paper
- Flushable moist towels to clean yourself before dilating as well as after going to the bathroom, which may be messy for a while (spraying) until things heal up. Baby wipes also work well. (Nothing that is alcohol based.)
- If you live alone, stock up on foods that are nutritious, will keep while you are away, and are easy to prepare. You may not want to brave the supermarket for a while

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