







Surgery and Recovery

Worksheet Best Case and Worst Case Scenarios

Ask your doctor about the best-case and worst-case scenarios of the surgery and where you likely fall between these two extremes. Then, ask what would be the best outcome if you didn't have the surgery, and what would be the worst that could happen. Find out where you fall between these scenarios. Use the worksheet to help you take notes.

Surgery		No Surgery	
Best Case 			Best Case
 Place a dot to indicate where your doctor thinks you fall between the extremes 			
Worst Case 			Worst Case

Adapted from Kruser JM, Taylor LJ, Campbell TC, et al. "Best case/worst case": training surgeons to use a novel communication tool for high-risk acute surgical problems. *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management*. 2017;53(4):711-719.e5.

Surgery and Recovery

Questions for the anesthesia team

What type of anesthesia will I get?

Options include local anesthesia that numbs the area, sedation (also referred to as twilight sleep), epidural (often used in labor), and general anesthesia. Your doctor should be able to go over the details of the type of anesthesia that you will receive.

Am I at risk for complications from anesthesia?

Ask if there are things that put you at higher risk for complications from the anesthesia. Ask what (if anything) can be done to minimize your risks. You should take these risks into account when weighing the decision to undergo surgery.

What can I expect when I wake up?

The doctor should be able to give you a sense of how you will feel when you wake up. They can inform you about what they will do to control pain, nausea, and other symptoms.

What are my options for pain control?

Try to understand all the options available, which can include opiates, non-opiates, as well as non-drug alternatives. Your doctor can advise you on how to weigh the risks and benefits of these different options as well as address any concerns you might have. For example, given the current opioid crisis, many people worry about getting addicted to pain medications. The doctor can discuss these concerns and how to minimize the risk.

What should I do to prepare for the procedure?

Make sure you understand all the pre-surgery instructions, like when to stop eating, whether or not to take your regular medications, and what to wear to the hospital. These can make a big difference on the day of the procedure.

Surgery and Recovery

Post-surgery Recovery Tracker

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Pain (on a 10-point scale)							
Bleeding (minimal, moderate, significant)							
Wound (note changes in color and discharge)							
New symptoms							
Bowel movement (number of times per day and consistency)							
Urination (number of times per day)							
Pain medication (record the amount you take to track how much you need and the trend over time)							
Morning medication							
Afternoon medication							
Evening medication							

Red flag symptoms _____

Follow up appointment _____

Surgery and Recovery

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	Day	Day	Day	Day	Day	Day	Day
Pain (on a 10-point scale)							
Bleeding (minimal, moderate, significant)							
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Follow up appointment _____