

# My Lumpectomy and Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy

Including Preparation  
and After Surgery Care



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# Timeline for Patients Having a Lumpectomy and a Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy

1 to 2 weeks after you  
sign consent for surgery

1 to 2 weeks before  
your surgery

1 to 2 days before  
your surgery

1

Your **surgeon's office** will call you with:

1. Your surgery date;
2. Breast cancer surgery education class date;
3. The date and time of any other appointments you need.



Dr. Nicole Look-Hong  
416-480-4210

Dr. Amanda Roberts  
416-480-5000 ext: 3255

Dr. Frances Wright  
416-480-4210

The **pre-anesthesia clinic**  
will call you with:

The date and time of your  
telephone or hospital  
assessment.

2

## Pre-anesthesia Assessment:

Hospital or Telephone  
Appointment

Date:

Time:

**Check-in location for  
in-hospital assessment  
appointments:**

Pre-anesthesia Clinic,  
M-Wing, Ground Floor,  
Room 402 (MG 402)

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## Seed Injection (Localization) Appointment

Date:

Time:

**Location:**

Breast Imaging  
Department,  
M-Wing, 6th Floor, Room  
205 (M6 205)

See page 7 for  
how to prepare.

**Breast Imaging Department:**  
416-480-4337

See page 8 for how to prepare.

1 business day before  
your surgery

The day before your  
surgery or the same day  
as your surgery

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The **Same Day Surgery clerk** will call you between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. to tell you when you need to arrive at the hospital to register for your surgery.



### Sentinel Node Injection Appointment

Date:

Time:

Location:

Nuclear Medicine  
Department\*  
A-Wing, Ground Floor,  
Room 21 (AG 21)

\*Check in first at  
M-Wing, Ground Floor,  
Room 502 (MG 502) if this  
appointment is the same  
day as surgery.

**Nuclear Medicine Department:**  
416-480-4360

*See pages 16 for  
how to prepare.*

The day of your surgery

2 to 3 weeks after  
your surgery

6



### Surgery

Date:

Time:

#### Registration Location

(Please check one ☒):

- ☐ **MG 502**  
(M-Wing, Ground Floor,  
Room 502)
- ☐ **M6 205**  
(M-Wing, 6th Floor,  
Room 502)
- ☐ **AG 21**  
(A-Wing, Ground Floor,  
Room 21)

*See page 29 for  
Sunnybrook map.*

*See pages 11-13 for  
how to prepare.*

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### Post-Operation Appointment Results

Date:

Time:

#### Location:

Breast Centre  
M Wing, 6th Floor  
Room 412 (M6 412)





## How to Use this Guide

The information in this guide will help prepare you for your lumpectomy and sentinel lymph node biopsy surgery. It also has information about what will happen on the day of surgery and your care after surgery.

Your surgeon and Sunnybrook nursing staff will go over this guide with you.

We know this may be a stressful time for you and you will be given a lot of information about your medical condition. We hope this booklet will help you keep track of what you need to do for your lumpectomy and sentinel node biopsy surgery.

On pages 2 and 3, there is a place to write the dates and times of all your appointments for your lumpectomy. At the back of the booklet, there is a page for you to write notes of your own. If at any time you have questions, please ask a member of your care team.

Your medical records are accessible online through MyChart, a service available to Sunnybrook patients. In order to use MyChart you will need a password, which can be picked up at the Medical Records Desk on the second floor of the Odette Cancer Centre (Room T2-212). You can also get a password by completing the form on this webpage: **[mychart.ca/pages/registration/onlineRegistrationsb.cfm](https://mychart.ca/pages/registration/onlineRegistrationsb.cfm)**.

The website address for MyChart is **[mychart.ca](https://mychart.ca)**.

A copy of this guide can be found on Sunnybrook's website at **[sunnybrook.ca/lumpectomy](https://sunnybrook.ca/lumpectomy)**

## What is a Lumpectomy?

A lumpectomy is surgery that removes only the area of concern within the breast and a small amount of normal breast tissue around it. The rest of the healthy breast tissue is left in place. The amount of tissue taken from the breast depends on the size of the lump or area of concern.

Your lumpectomy surgery may include other procedures such as the temporary placement of a titanium seed in your breast and a sentinel node biopsy.

# What is a Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy?

Lymph nodes act as filters in the body's circulatory system and sentinel lymph nodes are the lymph nodes closest to the tumour in the breast. As part of your lumpectomy, the surgeon will remove 1 to 3 sentinel lymph nodes in the armpit on the same side as the breast lump.

## Why are the sentinel lymph nodes removed?

- Sometimes cancer cells leave the breast tumour and spread to other parts of the body.
- Some of these cells will be caught in the lymph nodes.
- The surgeon needs to take out a few lymph nodes for testing.
- This information helps the doctors decide what other treatments you will need.

## Important Reminders:

- Please bring this booklet with you to your pre-anesthesia assessment appointment and on the day of your surgery.
- Please bring your Ontario Health Card and your Sunnybrook card on every visit to the hospital.
- If you do not read or speak English, please bring someone with you who can translate.





# Before Surgery

**You may have up to 3 appointments before the day of your lumpectomy surgery.**

- The first appointment is to make sure you are fit and safe for surgery (this is called the pre-anesthesia assessment).
- Some patients have an appointment to inject a small localizing seed into the breast. Your surgeon's office will confirm if you need this appointment.
- You may also have a sentinel lymph node injection appointment before the day of surgery. Your surgeon's office will confirm if this applies to you. See pages 16-17.



## Pre-anesthesia Assessment

**During the assessment a nurse will ask you about your medical history, the medications you take and will talk to you about any special needs you might have after your surgery.**

- The assessment may be done over the phone or in-person at the hospital.
- Patients who don't have other medical conditions are usually assessed over the phone.
- The pre-anesthesia clinic will phone to tell you whether you will have an assessment by phone or in-person at the hospital.
- The pre-anesthesia clinic will also tell you the date and time of the appointment.

### **If you have a telephone assessment appointment:**

- Make sure your surgeon's office has a phone number that you can be reached at during the day.
- The nurse will call your daytime number around the time of your appointment. Please keep in mind the nurse may fall behind schedule with other patients. The nurse may call you at any time within the hour of your scheduled appointment.

## If you have an in-person hospital assessment appointment:

- Please check-in at M Wing, on the Ground Floor, Room 402 (MG 402).
- The visit will take place in the Pre-anesthesia Clinic (located in MG 223) and last from 2 to 4 hours.
- You will meet with a nurse, and may also meet with a pharmacist and the doctor (the anesthesiologist) who will put you to sleep in the operating room when you have surgery.
- Please eat and take all your regular medications before you come to this appointment.

## What do I need to bring to the in-person hospital assessment appointment?

- If you do not read or speak English, it is helpful to bring someone who will be your translator.
- Please bring only 1 family member or friend to the appointment.

### Please bring:

- ☐ Your Ontario Health Card.
- ☐ The name and telephone number of your family doctor.
- ☐ The names and telephone numbers of any specialists who treat your medical conditions.
- ☐ All of your medications in the containers they came in. These include pills, inhalers or puffers, injections, and eye drops. Also bring any herbal medicines or vitamins you take.
- ☐ This booklet



# Seed Injection (Localization) Appointment

Your surgeon will tell you if you will need a seed injection (localization) appointment. If it is needed, the appointment will take place 1 to 2 days before your surgery. In this appointment, a small localizing seed will be injected very close to the abnormal tissue in your breast. The seed is about the size of a grain of rice and gives off a radioactive signal. During your lumpectomy surgery, the surgeon will use a special probe that can find a signal from the seed. This helps the surgeon find the abnormal breast tissue. Knowing the lump's exact location will mean less breast tissue will need to be removed.

## Where do I go for the seed injection?

- You will get a phone call from your surgeon's office to tell you the date and time of your seed injection appointment.
- The appointment will take place in Sunnybrook's Breast Imaging Department. It is in M Wing, 6th Floor, Room 205. (Take the elevators in M Wing to reach the 6th floor and then turn left to reach room M6 205 in the Breast Centre.)

## What happens during the seed injection?

- A radiologist and technologist will do the procedure.
- A local anesthetic is used to freeze your breast. You may feel a slight burning at first. The breast will then feel numb during the rest of the procedure.
- Mammogram and ultrasound imaging are used to locate the lump in your breast.
- A needle is used to place the seed beside the abnormal breast tissue.
- A mammogram or ultrasound image will make sure the seed is in the right place.
- The technologist may apply adhesive paper skin tapes (known as Steri-Strips) or a bandage, if required at the needle site.
- You do not need to do anything with the Steri-Strips.

## When will the seed be removed?

- The surgeon takes out the seed during your lumpectomy surgery.





# Getting Ready for Surgery

## When will the date and time of my lumpectomy surgery be confirmed?

- Your surgeon's administrative assistant will give you a surgery date 1 to 2 weeks after you have signed the consent for surgery. Please call if you do not hear from us by then. (See page 25 for phone numbers.)
- Please note all surgery dates are tentative until confirmed by your surgeon's administrative assistant 1 to 2 weeks before surgery.
- The Same Day Surgery Department will call you the day before your surgery between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to tell you what time you need to arrive at the hospital to register for your surgery. Please make sure the hospital has a phone number where you can be reached.
- For a Monday surgery you will be called on Friday.
- Your registration time could be as early as 6:00 a.m.
- Please tell your surgeon's office if you have a cold, fever or illness of any kind a few days before the surgery. Your operation date may need to be changed.

## ➞ What you need to do to get ready for surgery

### Jewelry

Take off all jewelry (including wedding bands) and all body piercing before you come to the hospital. If you cannot remove rings, they will be cut off prior to surgery.

#### Jewelry left on can cause harm including:

- Burns from the equipment
- Swelling and reduced circulation in fingers and toes
- Choking or other injuries from mouth jewelry
- Infections
- Skin tearing near the jewelry
- Risk of injury to the hospital staff

**EXCEPTION: Medic-alert bracelets should be worn**



### Make-up

- Take off all make-up. Remove all nail polish from your fingers and toes.
- Some surgical equipment does not work as well through nail polish.
- **DO NOT** use perfume, cologne, scented cream, body lotion, deodorant or hair products on the day of your surgery. Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre is a fragrance-free hospital.

## Bathing

- You may shower and wash your hair on the morning of your surgery.
- **DO NOT** shave your surgical area, such as your armpit.
- **DO NOT** use deodorant, talcum powder or baby powder on the day of your surgery.

## Food and Drink



- **DO NOT** eat any food after 12 midnight on the night before your surgery.
- **DO NOT** drink milk, orange juice (or any juice with pulp), or alcohol after midnight.
- **DO NOT** drink any clear broth, such as chicken broth, after midnight. The fat content can interfere with the anesthetic. As a result, your surgery may be delayed or postponed.
- You may drink up to 300 millilitres (1 glass) of clear fluids such as water, clear juices (apple juice, cranberry juice, or Gatorade) up until 2 hours before surgery.

## Medications

- **DO NOT** take any medications with acetylsalicylic acid or ASA (Aspirin); or blood thinners (Warfarin, Coumadin) 5 to 7 days before your surgery.
- **DO NOT** take any herbal remedies or homeopathic medicines for 14 days before your surgery. They can cause bleeding problems during your surgery.
- Bring this instruction booklet with you on the day of surgery so the nurses will know which medications you took.

### Stop taking these medications before your surgery:

Name of medication:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Last Dose: \_\_\_\_\_

Your doctor wants you to take these medications with a few sips of water in the morning before you leave for the hospital:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## If you have diabetes:

- **DO NOT** take any insulin or oral diabetic medication on the day of surgery.
- Check your blood sugar and if your sugar is low, drink a small glass of clear apple juice.
- If you are going home on the same day as your surgery AND you take insulin, you will be seen by a nurse practitioner who specializes in diabetes before you leave the hospital. The nurse practitioner will tell you how to continue your medication once you are at home.

## If you smoke:

Smoking or vaping nicotine can affect your healing and make your chances of getting an infection after the surgery higher.

### Quitting Aids:

- Try to stop, or smoke/vape less before your surgery.
- **DO NOT** smoke or vape any tobacco products or recreational drugs on the day of your surgery.
- Speak to your doctor or nurse if you would like to quit smoking or you need help with withdrawal symptoms after your surgery.
- You can find information about quitting smoking on Sunnybrook's website: [sunnybrook.ca/quitsmoking](https://www.sunnybrook.ca/quitsmoking).







# The Day of Surgery

Please bring this booklet with you on the day of your surgery. Before you go into the operating room, a number of steps may be required for your surgery:

- **Registration**
- **Sentinel lymph node injection appointment**  
(if this hasn't been done a day prior to your surgery)
- **Seed injection** (if this hasn't been done at an earlier date)



## Registration

### Where do I check in?

- When you get to the hospital, check in at the location provided to you by your surgeon's administrative assistant.
- **The registration locations include:**
  1. **Surgical Services Registration Desk:** M-Wing, Ground Floor, Room 502 (MG 502)
  2. **Breast Imaging Department:** M-Wing, 6th Floor, Room 205 (M6 205)
  3. **Nuclear Medicine Department:** A-Wing, Ground Floor, Room 21 (AG 21)
- Bring your Ontario Health Card.
- You will be provided with locker space to store your clothes and personal items, such as eye glasses, during your surgery.

### Please DO NOT bring:

- Money
- Jewelry
- Cell phones, iPads or other electronic devices



**The hospital will not take responsibility if they are lost or stolen.**

### How many family members or friends can come with me on the day of surgery?

- Please bring **ONLY 1** person with you to the hospital. Your companion will be asked to stay in the waiting room until you are ready for surgery. The person can then be with you until you are called for surgery.
- During your surgery, your family member or friend can wait in room MG 502.

## Note:



Very rarely, surgery cases are cancelled because there is someone else who needs an emergency surgery. If this happens to you, you will be contacted by your surgeon's office and a new surgery date will be booked as soon as possible.

## Sentinel Lymph Node Injection Appointment

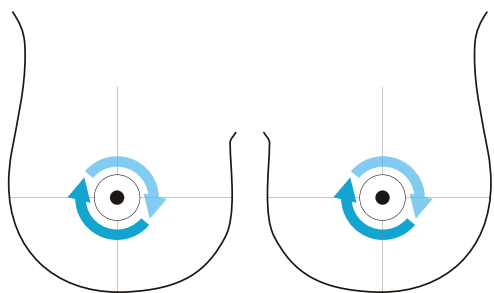
As part of your lumpectomy, the surgeon will remove sentinel lymph nodes in the armpit on the same side as the breast lump. The lymph nodes need to be specially identified before your surgery. This identification is called a Sentinel Lymph Node Injection. The injection takes place in the Department of Nuclear Medicine. The department is in A Wing, Ground Floor, Room 21 (AG 21). You will be given a map showing the location when you check in at the Surgical Services Registration Desk in M-Wing, Ground Floor, Room 205 (MG 502). The appointment can take up to an hour.

### What happens during the sentinel lymph node injection?

- The sentinel nodes are specially identified so the surgeon can find them.
- This is done by injecting a small amount of radioactive tracer into the breast.
- The tracer travels to the sentinel lymph nodes.
- The amount of radiation that the tracer gives off is very little. It will not hurt you.

### How do I get ready for the injection?

- The injection is made into the skin near your nipple and may sting.
- You may want to use EMLA cream or Tylenol (acetaminophen) to help reduce any pain or discomfort.
- You can buy this cream at a pharmacy. You do not need a prescription.
- Put the cream outside the areola (the dark area of the nipple) on the breast needing surgery up to 1 hour before your appointment.
- You can take some Tylenol (acetaminophen) up to 30 minutes before the injection (**DO NOT** take Tylenol if you are allergic to it).
- Please **DO NOT** take Aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid or ASA) because it may increase bleeding from surgery.



*Apply EMLA cream to the breast needing surgery around the areola as shown by the arrows on the diagram.*

## Note:

**Some patients have the sentinel lymph node injection appointment on the day BEFORE their lumpectomy surgery. Your surgeon's office will confirm with you when your appointment will take place.**

- If you are one of these patients, go directly to the Department of Nuclear Medicine – in Room AG 21 – at your appointment time. Make sure you bring your Ontario Health Card and Sunnybrook Card.
- The appointment can take up to 1 hour. You will go home afterwards.
- The next day you will come back to the hospital for your mastectomy surgery and the removal of the sentinel lymph nodes.
- When you get to the hospital on the day of your surgery, please check in at the Surgical Services Registration Desk. It is located in M Wing, Ground Floor, Room 502 (MG 502).



## Operating Room

Once you have finished all your pre-surgery appointments, you will be taken to the Same Day Surgery Unit. Nurses will complete the final checks and an intravenous (IV) will be started in your hand. When the surgeon is ready, you will be brought into the operating room.

### What will happen during my surgery?

- You will be put to sleep using a general anesthetic. Medication to make you sleep will be given through an intravenous needle.
- A tube will be placed down your throat to help you breathe.
- A small incision (cut) will be made over the area that needs to be taken out. The surgeon will then remove the lump, plus some normal breast tissue around it.
- Some of the sentinel lymph nodes will also be removed. This is called a sentinel lymph node biopsy.
- To find the nodes, the surgeon will use a probe that locates the radioactive tracer that was injected before your surgery.
- The surgeon may also use a blue dye to find the sentinel lymph nodes. This procedure is done in the operating room while you are asleep under general anesthetic.
- The surgeon injects the blue dye into the breast using a needle. The dye travels to the nearby sentinel lymph nodes and helps the surgeon to see them more clearly.
- All the tissue that is taken out will be sent to a lab to be examined by a pathologist (a doctor).
- The cut is closed with dissolving stitches.
- Paper skin tapes (known as Steri-Strips) are usually put over the cut.
- A dressing, or bandage, is then placed over the skin tapes.

# After Surgery

## What will happen after the operation is done?

- You will be taken to the recovery room.
- When you wake up, you will be moved back to the Same Day Surgery Unit in Room MG 601.
- A nurse will call your family member or friend to come and visit you.
- You will continue to rest and recover. The nurses will start to get you ready to go home.

### Note:

**You must have a responsible adult to take you home. It is dangerous for you to drive for 24 hours after your surgery because of the long-lasting effect of the anesthetic and pain medication.**



# After Surgery Care

## How will I feel after my surgery?

- You may have a sore throat from the breathing tube that was in place during your surgery.
- You may feel sick to your stomach and tired from the medications you were given during and after your surgery.
- You may also feel sleepy.



## What are some things I need to do after my surgery?

### Deep breathing and coughing

**Do deep breathing exercises as soon as possible to help your lungs recover after surgery. It is best to do these exercises while sitting up in a chair. But they can also be done lying in bed.**

- Take a slow deep breath in through your nose, filling your chest and stomach like a balloon.
- Try to hold your breath for 1 to 2 seconds.
- Slowly blow out through your mouth, like you are blowing birthday candles.
- Repeat 5 times.
- After the last breath, cough to try to clear any phlegm or mucus from your lungs.
- Do these deep breathing exercises 4 to 5 times a day in the first 48 hours after surgery.

### Movement

- You should move your arms soon after your surgery.
- **DO NOT** cradle your arms against your chest.
- For the first 4 to 6 weeks following surgery:
  - **DO NOT** lift anything over 10 pounds.
  - **DO NOT** do any heavy pushing, pulling or repetitive movements with the affected arm(s).
- The exercises that you need to start doing 24 hours after surgery are shown on page 25 of this booklet.

## What can I do to ease the pain from surgery?

- You will be given a prescription for pain medication before you leave the hospital after your surgery. Please take the pain medication as you are told by your health-care team.
- You can also use Tylenol (acetaminophen) Extra Strength.
- You can also use Advil (ibuprofen) in addition to the Tylenol.
- **DO NOT** use Tylenol or Advil if you are allergic to them.
- **DO NOT** take Tylenol Extra Strength if you have been prescribed Percocet (oxycodone) or Tylenol 3 by your doctor.

## How do I take care of my surgical incision (cut)?

- Leave the outer bandage on for 48 hours. You can then take it off.
- The incision is covered with adhesive paper tape called Steri-Strips.
- Leave these Steri-Strips in place for 10 days after your surgery.
- After 10 days, you can take off the Steri-Strips while you are in the shower (the water makes it easier to remove them). They may come off on their own before 10 days. This happens to many patients and is not something to be concerned about.
- There may be one stitch at the end of the incision. It can be removed by your surgeon at your follow-up appointment.
- A small amount of blood on the bandage or Steri-Strips is normal.
- Wear a good supportive bra (day and night). This will help reduce pain and swelling.

## What side effects might I have from the blue dye?

- If your doctor used blue dye to find your sentinel lymph nodes, you may have some side effects.
- Some people may have an allergic reaction to the dye. This is very rare and occurs in less than 1% of patients who have this injection. If this reaction happens, it will occur during your operation.
- The blue dye is absorbed into the blood stream. It leaves your body through your kidneys and urine.
- Your urine may be a blue or green colour for 24 to 48 hours after the operation. Your urine will return to a normal colour.
- The blue dye may also cause your skin to change colour, especially around the injection site. Your breast will return to its normal colour.
- Don't be surprised if your face or body also looks a bit blue or grey in colour as a result of the dye. This effect will disappear in 24 to 48 hours.
- Drinking water will help flush out the dye through your kidneys and urine.

## I hear a sloshing noise in my breast. Is that normal?

- Sometimes after a lumpectomy surgery, fluid may collect where the breast tissue was removed. The collection of fluid (called seroma) is a normal body process to heal the area. You may "hear" the fluid. It may sound like a "sloshing" noise. This is normal.



- If the area gets very swollen and you have a lot of pain, call the breast nurse between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday. The phone number to call is 416-480-5000. This is not an emergency. Some of the fluid may be drained and this may make you feel better.

## What is lymphedema?

- Lymphedema is swelling caused by fluid collecting in your arm and your chest.
- There is a very small chance of developing lymphedema after a sentinel node biopsy. The risk is 2-3%. That means only 2 or 3 out of every 100 patients who have a sentinel node biopsy will get lymphedema.
- This type of swelling may develop months or years after surgery.
- Signs of lymphedema include swelling, heaviness, aching or tingling in the arm or chest on the side you had surgery.

## Tips to help reduce your risk of lymphedema:

- Let your health-care team know if you develop swelling that does not go away.
- Maintain a healthy weight. Obesity is a risk factor.
- Try to avoid bloodwork (blood being withdrawn) on the side you had surgery.
- Protect your skin on the side you had surgery. Apply antibiotic cream to cuts, scratches and insect bites.

## When should I get medical help if I run into problems?

If you have any of the symptoms listed below — and it is between 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday — call the Breast Site Nursing Team at 416-480-5000.

If the symptoms happen outside of these times, call the general surgery resident on call at 416-480-4244 or go to the closest Emergency Department.

- Your incision (cut) gets red, swollen or very tender to touch. You may have an infection that needs to be treated with antibiotics.
- You have a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher for over 24 hours. You may have an infection that needs to be treated with antibiotics.

If within 72 hours of your surgery:

- You have a lot of bleeding from where you had your surgery. “A lot of” means a completely soaked bandage.
- Call your surgeon’s office. Or, if you cannot get in contact with the surgeon’s office, phone the general surgery resident on call at 416-480-4244.



## Is there anything I cannot do after surgery?

- **DO NOT** drive a motor vehicle for 24 hours after surgery as it may be dangerous with all the medications from the anesthetic.
- **DO NOT** drive while you are taking your prescription pain medication as the medication may affect your ability to drive safely.
- **DO NOT** drink alcohol while taking prescription pain medication because taking both together can be dangerous.
- **DO NOT** lift anything weighing more than 10 pounds for 3 weeks after the surgery as it may damage the incision.
- **DO NOT** do repetitive shoulder movements for 3 weeks after the surgery as they may damage the incision. Repetitive shoulder movements include ironing, sweeping, mopping for extended periods of time.

## When can I shower?

- You may have a shower after the outer dressings are taken off which is usually in two days.
- **DO NOT** soak or scrub the incision.
- **DO NOT** use soaps, creams or lotions over the incision until it is fully healed.
- Gently dry using a clean towel.

## When can I start my normal activities?

- **DO NOT** lift anything weighting more than 10 pounds (4.5 kilograms) for 1 month after your surgery
- You can do most of your normal activities 1 to 2 days after surgery, except for heavy lifting or repetitive movements with the arm that is on the same side as the surgery.
- You can go back to your normal diet when you feel hungry. There is no special diet after surgery.

## When can I go back to work?

- You can go back to work 6 to 8 weeks after a lumpectomy surgery that included a sentinel lymph node biopsy.

## What can I do if I am constipated?

**You may be constipated after surgery. Constipation can result from the medication used to put you to sleep for your surgery, taking certain pain medications, a change in diet and/or reduced physical activity.**

If you have trouble having a bowel movement, the following may help:

- Drink lots of fluid after your surgery.
- Use a laxative such as Senokot, which stimulates the bowels so they move. Senokot is available at a pharmacy. Take 1 to 2 Senokot tablets twice a day as needed.
- Eat prunes or drink prune juice.

If these things don't help, please call the nurse at 416-480-5000.

# Coping After Surgery

## How will I cope emotionally?

- Your emotional recovery is just as important as your physical recovery.
- You may have feelings of fear, sadness, or anger.
- Ask for help from family and friends.
- You may wish to speak to an Oncology Nurse from the Breast Cancer Program.
- Feel free to ask questions to help you understand your diagnosis, treatment and decision-making.
- You may also contact the Patient & Family Support Program at 416-480-4623 or ask your oncology nurse to refer you.

## What help can I get?

### Sunnybrook Odette Cancer Centre Resources

Call the Patient and Family Support Program at **416-480-4623** to access:

- Social worker
- Drug Reimbursement Specialist – helps patients find funding for medications not covered under the Ontario Drug Benefit Program
- Psychologist
- Psychiatrist (A doctor's referral is needed to see a Psychiatrist.)
- Dietitian
- PYNK program – for women under 40 with breast cancer
- PEARL (Patient Education and Resource Learning Centre) – 416-480-5000 extension 4534

### Other Important Sunnybrook Contacts:

- Occupational Therapist  
416-480-6100, extension 5335
- Physiotherapist  
416-480-6100, extension 80541

### Community Resources

Ask your team for more information about these programs:

- Canadian Cancer Society – Peer Support program
- Wellspring
- Look Good...Feel Better program
- Gilda's Club
- Toronto Rehabilitation Institute (Rumsey Site) – Health, Exercise, Active Living and Therapeutic Lifestyle Program



# Exercises After Surgery

- Normal use of your arm is important. If you have problems moving your arm after surgery, your doctor can refer you to a physiotherapist in the Breast Centre.
- Begin the following exercises one day after surgery. The exercises should be done 3 times a day until you have full movement in your arm(s).
- If pain stops you from doing your exercises, use your pain medication 30 minutes before you exercise.
- It is normal to feel a gentle stretch while exercising but you should not feel a sharp pain



- ① Sit or stand
- ② Lift your arm up, letting the thumb lead the way
- ③ Repeat 10 times



- ① Sit or stand
- ② Lift your arm up sideways with thumb leading the way
- ③ Repeat 10 times



- ① Sit or stand
- ② Roll your shoulders forwards and backwards
- ③ Repeat 10 times in both directions



- ① Sit with your back straight and feet firmly on the floor
- ② Put your shoulder blades together while turning your palms forward
- ③ Hold for 5 seconds, repeat 5 times

The exercises in this guide have been adapted from the booklet *Exercises after Breast Surgery*, Canadian Cancer Society, 2015.



# Who to Call if You Have Questions

**If you have questions about your surgery date, your pre-anesthesia assessment, or your post-surgery appointment, please call your surgeon's office.**

- For Dr. Look-Hong's office, call: 416-480-4210
- For Dr. Roberts' office, call: 416-480-5000, extension 3255
- For Dr. Wright's office, call: 416-480-4210

**If you have questions about your surgery or after-surgery care, please call 416-480-5000**

**For more information about breast cancer surgery at Sunnybrook go to [sunnybrook.ca/breastcancersurgery](https://www.sunnybrook.ca/breastcancersurgery)**



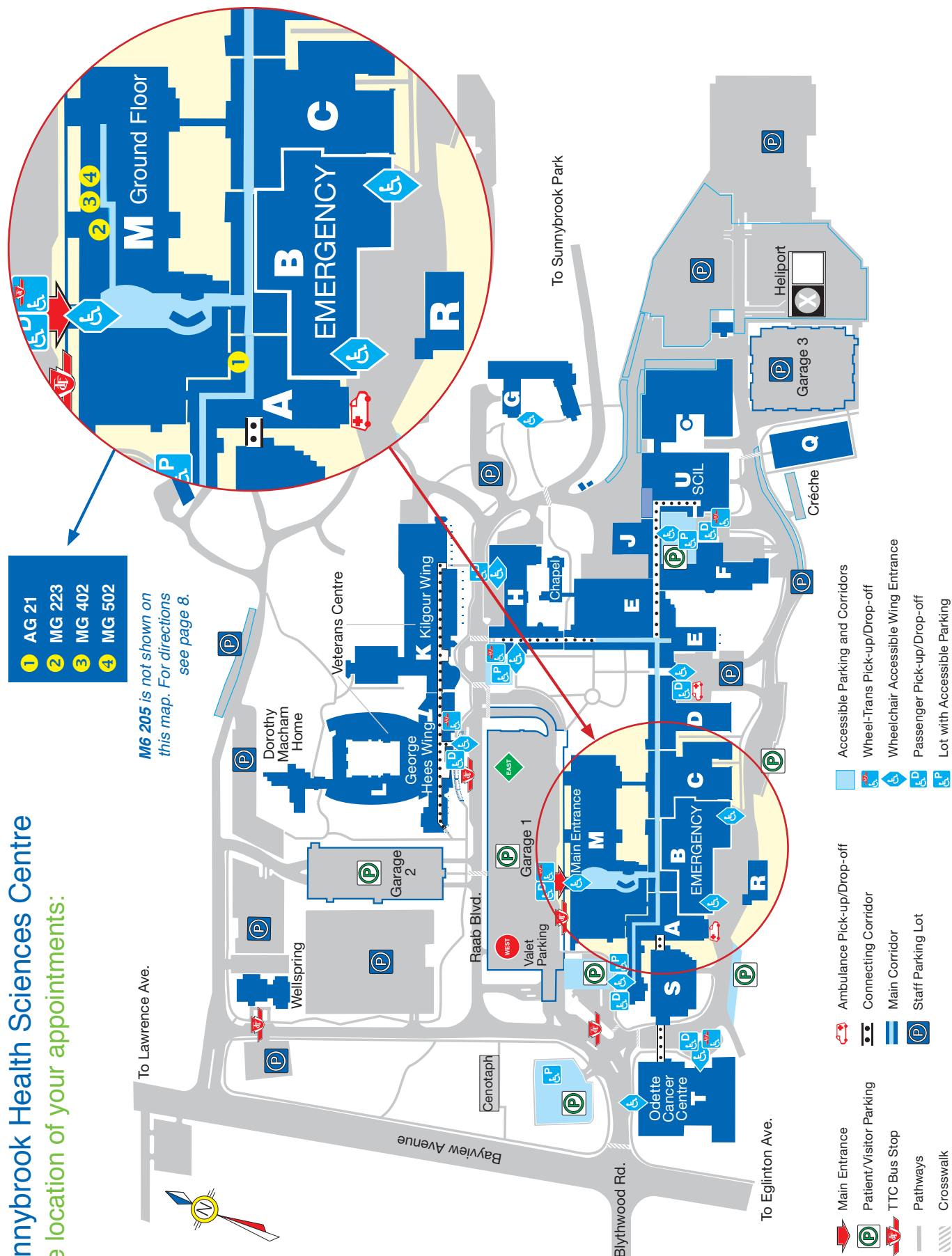


# Notes

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# Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre

## The location of your appointments:



**Odette Cancer Centre**  
2075 Bayview Avenue  
Toronto, Ontario M4N 3M5  
[sunnybrook.ca/odette](https://sunnybrook.ca/odette)

