

5 Elective Surgery Pre-Op Prep Musts

If you're a senior preparing for joint replacement surgery or another elective or scheduled surgical procedure, take a look at this checklist, prepared by Asbury Solomons' senior wellness experts.

1. **Ask questions.** Schedule a call or appointment with your surgeon or physician to get their specific advice. Ask them about potential complications that may occur, recovery time, any *contraindications* to the surgery or post-surgery restrictions and limitations. They may adjust your current medications, prescribe exercises or make dietary recommendations.
2. **Prepare physically.** Exercise is almost always a good thing. Be in the best physical shape you can be. Check with your doctor first, as exercise can be contraindicated at times – especially for cardiac surgery.
3. **Nutrition matters.** Your body will generally recover better if you fuel it with a healthy, balanced diet including protein and fruits and vegetables. Again, your doctor may have recommendations for this or suggest a dietary or vitamin supplement.
4. **Prepare for post-op with a call to your insurer.** Will you need to avoid stairs? Will you need any equipment like a walker or tub seat? Will you need help at home for laundry or shopping or to drive to follow-up appointments? Call your insurer and get specific about what they will and won't pay for. Ask them how much and what type of therapy will be covered and what your co-pay will be.
5. **Be well-rested and relaxed.** It is generally a good idea to avoid caffeine, especially the day and night before. If you are anxious about the surgery, sometimes the doctor can recommend a medication or supplement to help you sleep. Ask your physician about resources for relaxation and visualization techniques that can help calm your mind and prepare you for what's ahead.