



Northridge Hospital Medical Center  
A member of CHW

## Questions To Ask Your Doctor Before You Have Elective Surgery

*Even the best physician can't give you the right answers,  
if you're not asking the right questions.*

It is important to have confidence in the physician who will be performing your surgery. Whether this is someone you have chosen yourself, or a physician/surgeon you have been referred to, you can make sure that he/she is qualified to perform this operation.

**Your physician needs to listen to your issues, make an assessment, do necessary tests, and explain a recommended treatment.** So come prepared by writing down things you don't want to forget.

Understandably, having surgery makes many people feel anxious and nervous. If you are scheduled to have surgery, one way to relieve your anxiety is to learn all you can about the procedure.

Because your surgery is elective, this means that you have time to learn about your operation to be sure it is the best treatment for you. You also have time to work with your surgeon to make the surgery as safe as possible. Be active in your healthcare to have quality care.

- **Ask questions.** If you don't understand, have the doctor re-explain it to you.
- **Repeat back.** Make sure you have understood all the information your doctor has given you by repeating it back from your notes.
- **Provide** an accurate list of all medications and supplements you take.

### Questions

1. What operation are you recommending? Is there an alternative to surgery?
2. Why is the procedure necessary?
3. Can you explain the operation to me?
4. What are the surgeon's qualifications?
5. Which hospital will the surgery be done?
6. How much will it cost? Is it covered by health insurance?
7. What are the benefits of the surgery and how long will they last?
8. What are the risks of having the operation?
9. Should I get a second opinion?
10. What kind of anesthesia will I need?
11. How long will it take me to recover?

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