

# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PREOPERATIVE EVALUATION FOR NONCARDIAC SURGERY

## What Is Preoperative Evaluation?

Many people undergo surgery in their lifetime. Healthy people have a very low risk for problems during surgery. Before any surgery, your doctor will ask you questions about your health and health history. These may include questions about:

- Your age
- Medicines you take
- Health conditions you or family members may have
- Your past surgeries
- Your use of alcohol, tobacco, and other substances
- Your activity level

Your doctor may also do a physical examination to check your overall health. In some cases, you may need tests before surgery, such as blood tests or heart tests. These tests help your doctor learn about any risk for problems during and after surgery.

## What Increases My Risk for Problems?

Health problems and habits that affect your safety during and after surgery include:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Kidney disease
- Bleeding disorders
- Liver disease
- Difficulty walking a few blocks or walking up a couple of flights of stairs
- Heavy consumption of alcohol, tobacco, or other substances
- Excess body weight

## What Can I Do to Lower My Risk?

Before your surgery, try to:

- Quit smoking.
- Stop drinking alcohol, or limit the amount you drink.



- Be sure to tell your doctor about all medicines you take, even over-the-counter medicines like vitamins, herbs, and supplements.
- Stay active.
- Tell your doctor if you have problems with bleeding or if anyone in your family has a bleeding problem.

## Questions for My Doctor

- What problems could I have during or after my surgery?
- Do I have any conditions that could make my surgery risky?
- How should I prepare for my surgery?
- Do I need tests before my surgery?
- Should I stop taking or change any medicines that I use?
- How long before my surgery should I quit smoking?
- How long before my surgery should I quit drinking?
- What are warning signs I should look out for after my surgery?
- Will I need to take new medicines after my surgery?

## For More Information



**American College of Surgeons**  
[www.facs.org/for-patients/preparing-for-your-surgery](http://www.facs.org/for-patients/preparing-for-your-surgery)  
**American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists**  
[www.acog.org/Patients/FAQs/Preparing-for-Surgery](http://www.acog.org/Patients/FAQs/Preparing-for-Surgery)  
**MedlinePlus**  
<https://medlineplus.gov/surgery.html>