

Gender-Affirming Surgery Preparation Checklist

Kaiser Permanente Southern California

Updated October 2020

Employment

- Notify employer 30-60 days before surgery date
- Apply for FMLA with employer
- Apply for SDI Online

Cost

- Confirm share of cost with Member Services (1-800-464-4000)
- Budget for post-surgical supplies
- Plan for covering cost of living while out of work

Transportation

- Ride home from hospital
- Ride to/from follow-up appointments
- Confirm with surgeon when you can drive after surgery

Stress Reduction and Mental Health

- Connect with friends for emotional support
- Connect/Re-connect with your therapist
- To reduce stress and anxiety, list three self-care activities you can do before and after surgery

Caregivers

- Ask people to help you with your recovery
- Confirm caregivers' roles and your expectations
- Identify at least three caregivers

Prepare Recovery Space

- Confirm a safe and private space
- Prepare recovery space, clean clothes, and sheets

Meal and Chore Planning

- Meal/hydration planning (groceries, freeze foods)
- Plan who can do laundry, garbage, animal care, light housekeeping, errands, etc.

Supplies

- Purchase all necessary supplies from surgeon list
- Pack hospital bag (i.e. phone, phone charger, blanket, etc.)

Advanced Directive

- Complete advanced directive
- Bring advanced directive to hospital on day of surgery

Additional Items:

Gender-Affirming Surgery Consultation FAQ

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Your surgery consultation is a chance for you to ask your surgeon questions that will help you make decisions about your surgery and prepare for your recovery. Remember, you have a right to be fully informed about any procedure you are considering.

Below are sample questions you might want to discuss with your surgeon.

Surgery Outcomes / Surgery Choices

- What are my goals for surgery?
- What should I expect about the appearance of my body after surgery?

Healing Times and Re-Starting Activities

- Will I need additional surgeries? What is the timing for these surgeries?
- How long will I need to take off work if I have no complications?
- How long before I can do aerobic exercise? Lift weights? Ride a bicycle? Swim?
- Will I be able to drive after surgery? When?
- How long does it typically take people to be 100% healed after surgery?
- When can I be sexually active again?

Complications / Normal Healing

- What are the common complications from this procedure?
- Are there risks of complications that require ongoing care and could cause me to need more time off work or additional surgeries?
- How can/will I know if I have a complication or if I am healing normally?
- If I have a complication, will you be the person who will treat me?
- Do you have any recommendations for scar care like creams or massage techniques?
- Will I have permanent numbness or loss of feeling on or near the surgical site after surgery?
- Will I have any lifetime maintenance after surgery?

Anesthesia / Pain Management

- I have had a bad reaction to anesthesia or pain medications in the past. Can you tell me what my options are?

Prescription Medications / Vitamins and Supplements / Diet / Substance Use

- Do I need to stop taking certain medications before surgery? Can I taper them? When can I restart them?
- Do you recommend I add or eliminate anything from my diet before or after surgery?
- What are the possible consequences of using nicotine, alcohol, marijuana, or other substances before or after surgery?
- When can I start using substances again after surgery without putting me at risk for surgical complications?
- Will I need to adjust my hormones after surgery?

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Choosing Your Caregivers

Choosing your caregivers

Your caregivers are an important part of your total recovery plan. Pick people who are caring, dependable, and safe to be around.

Questions to ask yourself

- How would you feel about your caregiver assisting you to the toilet, to bathe, or to dress?
- Is your caregiver comfortable providing wound care?
- What will your caregiver do to support themselves if they are overwhelmed?

Think About Your Needs

- What makes me feel calm and relaxed?
- Who do I feel comfortable and safe to be around?
- Who provides me with the emotional support I need?
- Who makes me laugh?
- Who is most dependable?

Communicate Your Needs

- Be proactive in your communication
- Identify which activities/roles you need help with
- Assign specific tasks to individual caregivers

Brainstorm all aspects of your life, including day-to-day responsibilities around the house and activities of self-care that you enjoy.

- Meal preparation
- Social visits
- Light housework (dog walking, laundry, tidying up, etc.)
- Pharmacy runs
- Grocery shopping
- Transportation to post-op appointments
- Emotional support

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How Can I Help?

FAQ Sheet for Caregivers

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When our friends or family members face a health issue, we naturally want to support them. We just may not know exactly how to help. Below is a list of concrete ways that you can offer to support your loved one through their gender affirming surgery and recovery.

Start with the basics

Before surgery, help your loved one prepare for their return home. This may include helping them clean or declutter their space so they can return to a calm and safe living environment. You might want to help with grocery shopping or help preparing nutritious meals that can be frozen and heated later.

Take on household chores

For the first few weeks post-discharge, your loved one will need help with basic household chores. You might want to ask if you can assist with them. This might include grocery shopping, cooking, housekeeping, and pet care.

Assist with medical appointments

Until your loved one can resume normal daily activities, they may need helping driving to and from their medical appointments. Make yourself available for help with transportation.

Keep a running list for medical professionals

There is a significant amount of information that is provided to any patient upon discharge from surgery. It is difficult to remember all the questions patients want to ask their doctors. Help them by keeping a running list of questions or concerns that they want to discuss with their doctors, nurses, therapist or other medical or health professionals.

Watch for changes

You provide an important role in helping your loved one heal during their recovery. Keep an eye out for changes that others—including the patient—might miss. Although not expected, any complications from surgery and side effects from medication must be addressed promptly.

Provide emotional support

Many patients have been looking forward to this surgery for years. But that does not mean that their recovery from surgery will be free from feelings of frustration, fear, or doubt. Ongoing support and encouragement will be very helpful during this process.

Take care of yourself

Being a caregiver can be an emotionally and physically draining task. Clear and direct communication will be helpful. Take time for yourself during this process, too. Make sure that you have scheduled breaks, free from these temporary responsibilities.

Source: www.healthline.com

Gender-Affirming Surgery FAQ Sheet - FMLA

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What is FMLA?

FMLA refers to the Family Medical Leave Act, a federal law that guarantees certain employees up to 12 workweeks of **unpaid leave** each year with no threat of job loss.

You **do not need** to disclose the reason or details for FMLA. You only need to say you are having a **medically necessary procedure**.

Your employer **may require** you to take sick time, personal time, or vacation time during your leave.

You might decide to use time you have accrued so you continue to get paid during your leave.

Am I eligible for FMLA?

- You have worked for your employer for at least 12 months
- You have worked for your employer for at least 1250 hours in the last 12 months
- Your employer has 50 or more employees within 75 miles of your job
- You are automatically eligible for FMLA if you are a state, local, or federal employee.

How do I apply?

- At least 30 days before your leave, contact your human resources department and/or supervisor and tell them you will be taking FMLA leave
- Get the necessary documentation from your primary care provider or surgeon

Gender-Affirming Surgery FAQ Sheet State Disability Insurance (SDI)

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Updated October 2020

What is SDI?

SDI is a temporary income replacement program

- SDI is a temporary income replacement state benefit that is payable for a maximum of 52 weeks
- Your weekly benefit amount is approximately 55% of your income (some exceptions apply)

Am I eligible to receive SDI?

To receive SDI benefits, you must:

- Have paid at least \$300 in wages towards SDI contributions.
- File your claim within 49 days of your surgery.
- Serve a seven-day, non-payable waiting period.

Upon approval, you will receive a **debit card** and an account where your benefits will be deposited.

You may need to exhaust your accrued time before SDI benefits take effect.

How do I apply for SDI?

- Submit SDI application online or in person
- You will be given a registration number when you apply
- Obtain a "Work Activity Status Form" from your surgeon
- You will need to contact KP Medical Records / Disability Office and provide them with your registration number

If surgery is taking place at an outside facility, ask your surgeon's office to submit documentation.

To learn more visit

<http://www.edd.ca.gov/disability> or **call** 1-800-480-3287

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The Importance of Self-Care

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About Self-Care



Making sure that we take time for ourselves is one of the most important aspects of living a full and emotionally healthy life. Unfortunately, these activities of self-care are often the first things that drop off our daily “to-do” list when life gets stressful. Committing to self-care activities may assist you in your physical and emotional recovery.

What is self-care?

Self-care is any activity that you consciously do to tend to your mental, emotional, and physical needs. They are fun, enjoyable, or relaxing activities that replenish you.

What are some barriers to self-care?

You might not engage in activities of self-care for a variety of reasons. You might think that it feels selfish. You might think that self-care is indulgent. Sometimes, financial limitations restrict our ability to even brainstorm a list of self-care activities.

Remember this: self-care is necessary – not selfish. It may feel indulgent – and that can be good. Most importantly, the vast majority of self-care activities are free!

Some Self-Care Activities

- Read a library book
- Meditate
- Prioritize sleep
- Eat a healthy, nutritious diet
- Cook something new
- Laugh with friends
- Write an uplifting letter to a friend
- Keep a gratitude journal
- Take a hot shower/bath
- Go for a walk
- Explore a new area of town
- Listen to your favorite songs
- Watch your favorite movie
- Talk with a friend—in person!
- De-clutter your closet or home
- Have a picnic with a friend
- Add your own ideas to this list!

Try to complete **at least one** activity of self-care each day. Make sure it is intentional, replenishing, and enjoyable!