



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

about Elective Surgeries and Procedures at WellSpan Health

Q. Is it safe to have my surgery or procedure right now?

Your safety, and that of your care team, remains our number one priority. As your trusted partner, we're prepared to care for you during your elective surgery or procedure because we've taken the following thoughtful and comprehensive measures to avoid the spread of infection in our facilities:

- WellSpan Health caregiving team members are screened for COVID-19 when arriving to work each day.
- Our patients are routinely screened and tested for COVID-19 prior to their surgery or procedure.
- As before, we are conducting thorough pre-procedure assessments, and utilizing virtual services as appropriate.
- All staff are wearing a face covering and additional personal protective equipment required for their responsibilities.
- All patients are required to wear a face covering and are provided one if they do not have it.
- We continue to abide by a stringent visitor policy which prohibits all visitors, except in special circumstances.
- In facilities where we are caring for COVID-19 positive patients, patients are being treated in designated areas and by designated staff, separate from our elective surgery and procedure areas.
- Although used sparingly, our waiting rooms are appropriately arranged to maintain social distancing parameters.
- All WellSpan Health operating and procedure rooms, patient rooms, equipment and surfaces are extensively cleaned and sanitized.
- We continue to adhere to the guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Prevention and the Pa. Department of Health.

Q. When will elective surgeries and procedures resume?

Elective surgeries and procedures will resume at most locations with patients currently scheduled from May 18 onward. We will also be working to reschedule patients whose elective surgeries and procedures were postponed between March 23 – May 17, and incorporating new patients needing elective surgeries and procedures into our developing schedule.

Q. Why is WellSpan Health choosing to resume performing elective surgeries and procedures?

In line with the latest guidance from the Pa. Department of Health, which permits surgical facilities to resume performing elective surgeries and procedures, we are thoughtfully planning a regional, phased approach to resuming certain services that our patients need.

Safety remains our number one priority. That is why we are beginning this phased approach by resuming only those low-risk procedures and surgeries that are deemed necessary to ensure safe, timely and appropriate patient care. We will resume these specific procedures, starting May 18.

Early measures to postpone non-urgent surgeries and procedures, enabled us to care for our community during the height of the pandemic while preserving the health and safety of our staff, patients and visitors. This decision was also in line with directives from Governor Wolf and the Pa. Department of Health to postpone elective admissions, surgeries and procedures.

Q. Does this affect elective surgeries and procedures at all WellSpan Health locations?

As this is a phased approach at resuming certain elective surgeries and procedures, the timing will vary depending upon patient needs in each community. Patients will be informed as schedules are developed.

Q. Are other health systems resuming elective surgeries and procedures?

Yes. Many health systems have signaled a return to providing elective surgeries and procedures, in line with state and national guidance.

Q. If I am an impacted patient, how will I be informed?

A team member from your doctor's office will be contacting you directly to confirm your procedure, provide pre-procedural instructions and answer your questions.

Q. Will prior-authorization with my insurance provider need to be resubmitted – even if it had been completed previously?

If your procedure was prior-authorized before being postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most insurance providers will only require that we update the date of your scheduled procedure. If the prior-authorization was started but not completed, insurance providers are working with us to finish the prior-authorization versus starting over.

Q. What should I expect when my elective surgery or procedure takes place?

You will be contacted by your doctor's office to confirm your elective surgery or procedure. A caregiving team member will ask you a few COVID-19 symptom screening questions.

You will receive information about preparing for your elective surgery or procedure and day-of instructions so you know what to expect upon arrival.

In order to protect the health and safety of our patients and staff and avoid the spread of infection in our facilities, all patients must be tested for COVID-19 prior to their surgery or procedure. In order to ensure your test results are received prior to your scheduled procedure, we ask that you complete the COVID-19 test five days in advance of your procedure.

Please familiarize yourself with WellSpan's visitor policy which has been established to ensure the health and safety of our staff and patients.

Q. Will I need to complete my pre-surgery testing again?

For your safety, if it has been more than 30 days since your elective procedure was postponed, you will need to have your pre-surgery history and physical redone and may also need to have testing redone. You will also be tested for COVID-19; patients who test positive for COVID-19 will be referred to their physician to discuss their care and next steps.

Q. Will I be charged for this pre-surgery testing again?

WellSpan will follow its current billing protocols and any balances resulting from repeated pre-surgery testing will not be passed on to the patient.

Q. Will all care needed after my elective surgery or procedure be available?

Yes. Our comprehensive plan to resume elective surgeries and procedures includes the availability of all needed pre-and-post-surgery and procedure services.

Q. Should I delay care until the pandemic is over?

Patients should not delay care when medical attention is needed, especially those with pre-existing or chronic conditions. We continue to provide the safest, highest quality care to all our patients, and remain prepared to provide emergency care for our communities.

