



Advice for Patients Concerned About Correct Site Surgery

1. Be an active member of your health care team by taking part in every decision about your health care.
2. If you are having surgery or an invasive procedure, make sure that you and the health care professionals treating you all agree on exactly what will be done during the surgery or procedure.
3. Verify the information on your patient identity bracelet. Alert someone a member of the health care team if the information is incorrect and insist that it be replaced immediately.
4. Make sure the operative permit you sign includes the correct information about your surgical site (i.e., right or left) and procedure. Thoroughly read all medical forms and make sure you understand them before you sign any forms.
5. Ask to have the surgical or procedure site marked on your body with an indelible marker. If possible, be involved in marking the site. Only have the correct site marked.
6. Ask questions and speak up if you have any concerns. Keep asking questions until you understand the answers. Ask members of the health care team what steps will be taken to ensure your safety and correct site surgery.
7. Take a responsible family member or friend to accompany you to your doctor's visits and on the day of your surgery or procedure so that they can serve as your advocate and speak up for you if you are unable.

Additional resources about how patients can ensure their safety

<http://www.ahrq.gov/consumer/20tips.htm>

<http://ahrq.gov/consumer/5steps.htm>

<http://www.spine.org/articles/ptsafety.cfm>

<http://www.jcaho.org/general+public/patient+safety/speak+up/hospital+brochure-eng.htm>