

What should I do before my surgery?

- You'll probably be admitted to the hospital the afternoon before your operation. The staff will do some tests, give you instructions and prepare you for surgery.
- Your healthcare team (surgeons, cardiologists, anesthesiologists, nurses and therapists) will visit you to discuss your operation. This is a good time to ask questions and voice any concerns you may have.
- You may need some routine tests or procedures, such as an electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG) and chest X-ray.
- Hair will be shaved off the site where the operation will be done. That makes it easier to clean the skin and prevents pain when adhesive bandages are applied.
- Soap will be used to wash your skin with antibacterial soap to reduce risk of infection.
- Technicians will draw blood for lab tests and to cross-match for donor blood. Modern operating

methods, however, reduce blood loss and a transfusion is done as seldom as possible.

- You won't be able to eat or drink anything after midnight before your surgery.
- Your doctor may tell you that you cannot take certain medicines, such as aspirin, that affect blood clotting.

What will happen on the day of my operation?

- Give your glasses, dentures, watch, jewelry, contact lenses, clothing and other personal items to family members.
- About an hour before your operation, you'll get medicines to help you rest comfortably.
- Attendants will wheel you to the operating room on a rolling bed. You'll probably be awake enough to move between the hospital room bed and your rolling bed, but you may not remember doing Q

(continued)



- Heart operations are usually planned in advance and start on time, but sometimes an emergency may delay them

What happens in the operation room?

- You will be given anesthesia to cause deep sleep, freedom from pain and to leave you with no memory of the operation
- Heart operations usually take 3-5 hours. The length usually depends on how complex the operation is.
- Your family and friends should stay in the waiting room so the surgeon can find them to keep them informed
- After the operation, you will be moved to the intensive care unit (ICU) or a recovery room for your recovery to begin



Call **1-800-AHA-USA1**

(1-800-242-8721), or visit **heart.org** to learn more about heart disease and stroke.

Sign up to get **Heart & Stroke**, a free magazine for heart patients and their families, at **heartinsight.org**.

Connect with others sharing similar journeys with heart disease and stroke

Take a few minutes to write your questions for the next time you see your healthcare provider.

For example: