

## Preparation for surgery requiring general anaesthesia

### General preparation for surgery

It is important that you stay fit and healthy by eating a daily balanced diet and keep well hydrated. Each week undertake at least 2 hours of moderate aerobic exercise spread out over the course of a week. Sleep well – try to get 8 hours sleep each night the week before surgery.

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### Body Mass Index (BMI) and surgery

Being significantly overweight increases the complication risks of anaesthesia as well as surgery and can lead to post operative chest infections, wound healing problems as well as the development of blood clots in the legs (deep vein thrombosis or DVT) which can spread to the lung (pulmonary embolism or PE).

If you are overweight and have a body mass index (BMI) of over 30 then you should actively take measures to lose weight and reduce your BMI to a healthy range in order to minimise your risk of these complications. Losing weight should be undertaken in a healthy controlled way by sensible dieting and exercise. Crash diets to lose weight quickly are not safe.

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### Smoking

Smoking increases the risks of general complications including chest infections, wound healing problems following surgery as well as risks of developing a blood clot in the leg (deep vein thrombosis or DVT) which can spread to the lung (pulmonary embolism or PE).

Ideally stop smoking altogether 6 weeks before your surgery. If you cannot do this you should reduce smoking significantly and discuss this with Mr Johnson. Absolutely do not smoke on the day of surgery.

### Alcohol

Reduce alcohol intake to less than 2 units per day the week before surgery and avoid alcohol for 48 hours prior to surgery.

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### Air travel before surgery

Any operation carries a small risk of clots developing in the leg called deep vein thrombosis or DVT which can spread to the lung (pulmonary embolism). The risk is greater with longer operations, in smokers, in women, and in patients with chronic infection. Operations on the pelvis and legs carry a higher incidence.

Air travel carries a risk of DVT due to depressurisation and inactivity. The risk is greater in economy and increases with the length of the flight. You should not fly immediately before or after an operation as each operation and each flight are accumulative. If you live abroad, you should plan to arrive a few days before the operation and do not fly immediately afterwards.

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### Herbal and alternative therapies

The actual ingredients of many novel and alternative therapies are uncertain and, in some circumstances, will interact with anaesthesia. As a result, I advise that all herbal and alternative medications are stopped at least one week prior to surgery.

## Medication and allergies

As a general rule you should continue to take all your normal pills and medications (with a sip of water if required) at the normal times even on the day of surgery except in the following circumstances.

- You take any drugs that end with ....pril (eg ramipril, lisinopril) – avoid these on the day of surgery
- You take any drugs that end with ...artan (eg losartan, valsartan) – avoid these on the day of surgery
- You take tablets to control your diabetes. All pills and tablets used to treat diabetes should be omitted on the day of surgery (if you take long-acting medication e.g. Lantus, please discuss this with Mr Johnson who will seek advice from his anaesthetist)
- If you take warfarin, it should be stopped 5 days prior to surgery. If you take warfarin because you have a mechanical heart valve you will need specialist advice so please mention this to Mr Johnson
- For procedures lasting longer than 1 hour it is normal practice to stop the contraceptive pill one cycle before the date of surgery as this can increase your risk of getting a blood clot in your leg (called a deep vein thrombosis or DVT). This should be discussed with Mr Johnson.
- Avoid non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin, ibuprofen and voltrol for 10 days before surgery unless otherwise indicated by Mr Johnson.

If you are having a facelift procedure or eyelid surgery, then your blood pressure control is extremely important, please discuss your medication with Mr Johnson well before the day of the operation.