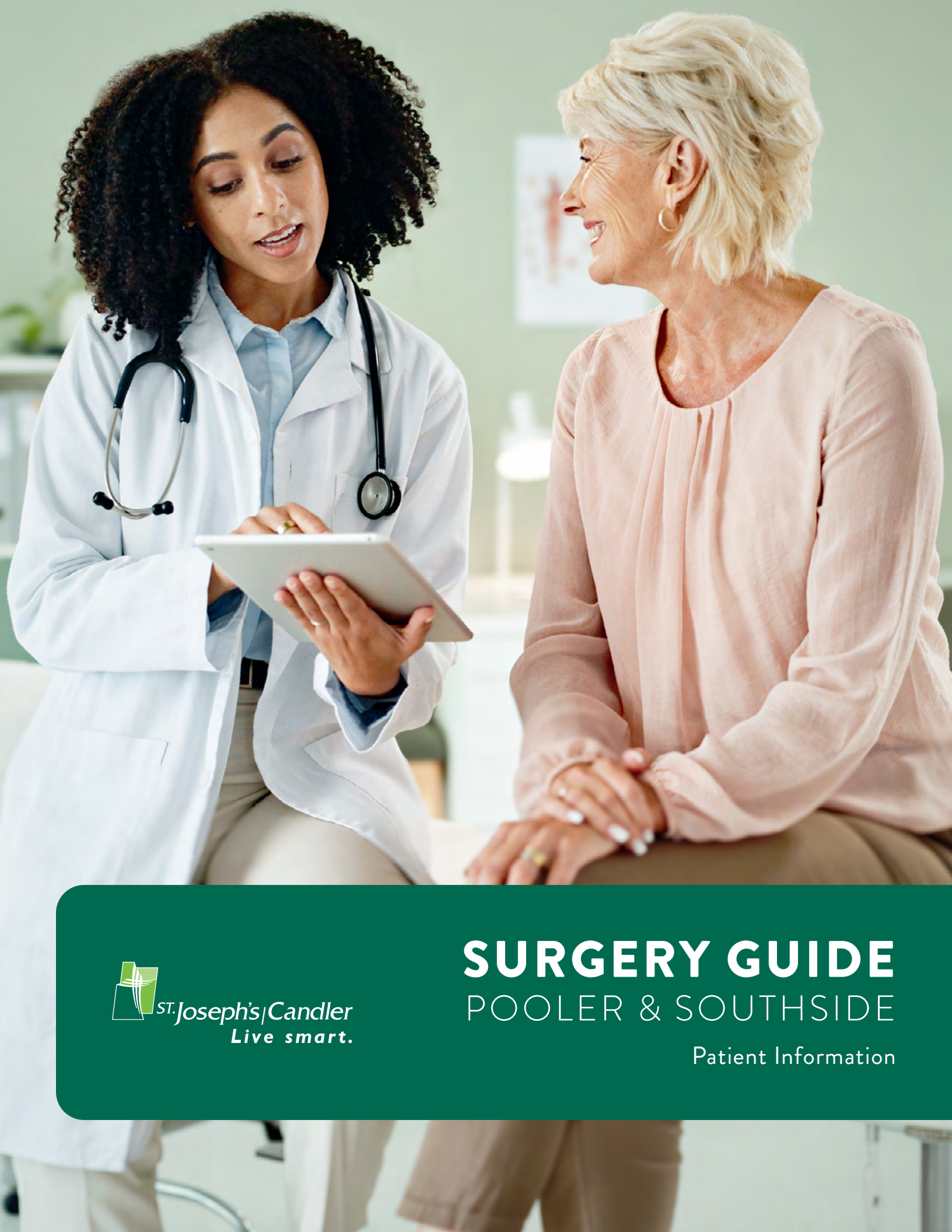




SURGERY GUIDE

POOLER & SOUTHSIDE

Patient Information



WELCOME

Thank you for choosing St. Joseph’s/Candler for your surgical care. We are honored to be part of your health journey, and our team is committed to providing you and your family with safe, compassionate care from your first phone call through your recovery at home.

We understand that having surgery, whether it has been planned for months or scheduled on short notice, often brings with it a mix of feelings. You may feel hopeful about what comes next. You may also feel anxious about the unknowns. Both responses are completely normal, and your care team is here to support you at every step.

This guidebook is designed to walk you through what to expect at each stage of your surgical experience, from your pre-screening through your time at home. As you read, please write down any questions that come to mind and bring them with you to your appointments. There are no wrong questions, and your care team welcomes the chance to address any concern, large or small.

If anything is unclear or if your circumstances change before your surgery date, please reach out to us or to your surgeon’s office. We are here to help.

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BEFORE YOUR SURGERY

PRE-SCREENING

Before your surgery, you will receive a phone call from a nurse at Outpatient Surgery to begin your pre-screening.

Pre-screening is a multi-step process that includes pre-testing, pre-admission, and other preparation steps needed to get you ready for surgery. During this call, your nurse will:

- ✓ Review your medical and surgical history
- ✓ Confirm the medications, vitamins, and supplements you currently take
- ✓ Ask about your preferred pharmacy
- ✓ Perform or schedule any pre-surgical tests you may need, such as bloodwork, an electrocardiogram (EKG), or x-rays
- ✓ Register you for surgery
- ✓ Tell you about St. Joseph's/Candler Patient Portal, our patient portal, where you can view your test results online



If additional review is needed based on your health history, an in-person pre-screening appointment will be scheduled. Otherwise, the nurse will provide all of your pre-operative instructions over the phone.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Before pre-screening is complete, your nurse will give you both verbal and written instructions on:

- ✓ When to stop eating and drinking before surgery
- ✓ Which medications to take, hold, or stop before your procedure
- ✓ How to prepare yourself and your home for surgery
- ✓ What to bring with you and what to leave at home
- ✓ What to expect on the day of your surgery and during your recovery

Plan for about 30 to 60 minutes if you have an in-person appointment, or 30 to 45 minutes if your pre-screening is conducted entirely by phone.

WHAT TO BRING OR HAVE READY FOR YOUR PRE-SCREENING

If you have an in-person pre-screening appointment, please bring the following with you. If your pre-screening is by phone, please have these items ready when the nurse calls:

- ✓ A valid health insurance card
- ✓ Photo identification
- ✓ A form of payment, if your insurance plan requires a co-pay
- ✓ A complete list of every medication, vitamin, supplement, and herbal product you take. Include the dose and how often you take each one. You may bring the prescription bottles themselves if that is easier for you.

- ✓ Your wallet ID card for any implanted devices (for example, a pacemaker, AICD, implanted pain pump, or nerve stimulator)
- ✓ A summary of your current health conditions and any previous surgeries
- ✓ Any paperwork related to your upcoming surgery that your surgeon has given you
- ✓ The names and phone numbers of your physicians
- ✓ Proof of guardianship, if you are the legal guardian of the patient

PAPERWORK YOU WILL COMPLETE

Whether your pre-screening is in person or by phone, you will be asked to complete a Consent for Treatment and any additional insurance forms required by your coverage.

You will also be asked whether you have an **ADVANCE DIRECTIVE**. An Advance Directive is a written set of instructions that lets your care team know the type of care you would want if you became unable to make decisions for yourself. It is used only if you are unable to speak for yourself at the time a decision must be made. If you already have one in place, please bring a copy to your pre-screening appointment, or to outpatient surgery on the day of surgery.

PREPARING FOR SURGERY

The days and weeks leading up to your procedure are an important window to set yourself up for the best possible outcome. The steps below will help your body, your home, and your support network be ready when your surgery date arrives.

HEALTHY HABITS | BEFORE SURGERY

A few choices in the weeks and days before surgery can make a meaningful difference in how well you heal:

- ✓ **STOP SMOKING/VAPING:** Smoking and vaping slow healing, raise the risk of complications during and after surgery, and increase the likelihood of blood clots. If you would like help cutting back or quitting, your pre-screening nurse can connect you with resources.
- ✓ **KEEP YOUR BLOOD SUGAR STEADY:** If you have diabetes, maintaining stable blood sugar in the weeks before surgery reduces your risk of complications and helps you recover more quickly.
- ✓ **REST:** Sleep is one of the most underappreciated tools for recovery. Aim for full nights of rest, especially in the final week before your procedure.

- ✓ **EAT WELL AND STAY HYDRATED:** Good nutrition and adequate fluids in the days leading up to surgery give your body the building blocks it needs to heal.



✔ **TAKE YOUR CHG SHOWER:** Your pre-screening nurse may instruct you to bathe or shower with a special antiseptic soap called chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG) on the evening before and the morning of your surgery. This soap helps reduce the bacteria on your skin and lowers your risk of a surgical site infection. The soap will either be provided at your pre-screening visit, or your nurse will let you know where to purchase it. If you are allergic to CHG, an alternative will be provided.

✔ **USE CLEAN LINENS THE NIGHT BEFORE:** After your CHG shower, sleep on clean sheets, wear clean pajamas, and keep pets out of your bed. These small steps further reduce your risk of infection.

🕒 **WHEN DO I NEED TO ARRIVE FOR SURGERY?**

Someone from the surgery team will call you the day before your procedure with your exact arrival time. They will also review your eating and drinking restrictions with you again. If your surgery is on a Monday, you can expect the call on the Friday before.

😷 **IF YOU GET SICK BEFORE YOUR SURGERY**

If you develop a cold, the flu, a fever, or any infection in the days before your procedure, please call your surgeon's office. If you wake up the morning of surgery feeling unwell, call your surgeon's office before leaving for outpatient surgery.

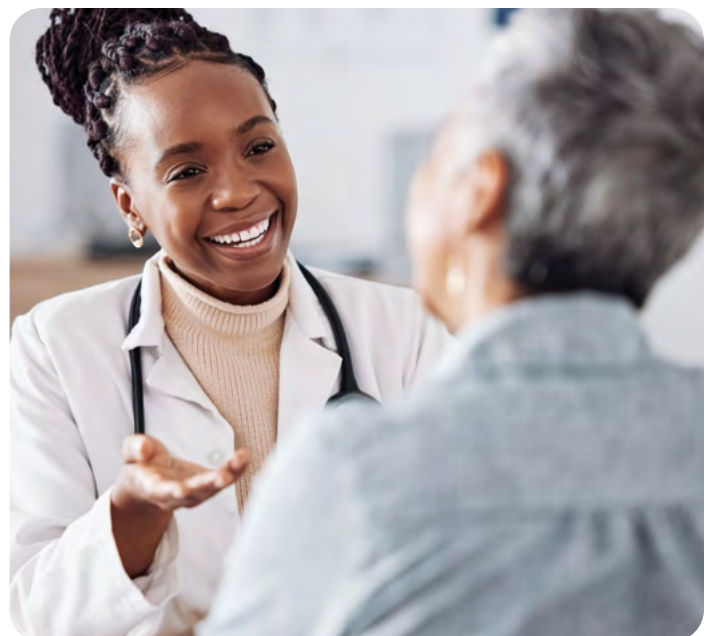
🚗 **ARRANGING YOUR RIDE HOME**

You will not be allowed to drive yourself home from outpatient surgery, even if your procedure was minor. The medications you receive will affect your judgment and reflexes for hours afterward. Please arrange ahead of time for a responsible adult to drive you home and stay with you for at least the first 24 hours after your surgery. If you do not have a ride and a support person in place, your surgery may need to be postponed.

We strongly encourage the person driving you home to stay on the campus for the duration of your procedure. No public transportation is allowed for your trip home from surgery.

💳 **HOW YOUR SURGERY WILL BE BILLED**

Your surgeon's office will share your insurance information with our team, and we will verify your benefits and obtain any authorizations needed for your surgery. If you have questions about your insurance coverage, those are best directed to your insurance company. If you would like an estimate of your out-of-pocket costs for the procedure, please call the hospital directly and ask for the Patient Precertification department. A representative can walk you through what to expect financially and answer questions about payment options.





THE DAY OF YOUR SURGERY

Now that you are prepared, here is what to expect when you arrive at outpatient surgery. Your surgery may need to be cancelled or delayed if your pre-screening instructions were not followed, if you arrive late, or if you do not have a responsible adult to take you home.

WHAT TO BRING TO OUTPATIENT SURGERY

- ✓ Your insurance card
- ✓ A photo ID
- ✓ A form of payment, if your insurance plan requires a co-pay
- ✓ Your Advance Directive, if you have one (living will, healthcare surrogate documents, or guardianship papers)
- ✓ Your wallet ID card for any implanted devices
- ✓ A current list of your health conditions, previous surgeries, and the medications you take, including dosages and how often you take them. If you provided this list during pre-screening, you do not need to bring it again.
- ✓ Any X-ray or MRI films you were asked to bring
- ✓ Casual, loose-fitting clothing that is easy to take off and put on. Consider that you may be going home with a bandage, cast, brace, or splint that affects how clothing fits.
- ✓ A case or storage container for glasses, contacts, dentures, partial plates, hearing aids, or any other prosthesis. Bring the cleaning solutions you need for these items as well.
- ✓ Any back-to-work notes or activity restriction forms that you need your surgeon to complete
- ✓ Any specific items your surgeon asked you to bring, such as a surgical boot, brace, post-op shoes, wound vac, walker, or crutches
- ✓ Any medications such as an inhaler, only if your pre-screening nurse instructed you to bring them. Please leave all other medications at home.
- ✓ Any paperwork from your other physicians (for example, forms or test results from a cardiologist)
- ✓ Assistive devices you use daily, such as a cane, walker, or wheelchair
- ✓ For children having surgery: a favorite blanket, stuffed animal, or comfort item. These may stay with your child during surgery and in the recovery room.
- ✓ Your CPAP machine, if you use one for sleep apnea

ITEMS TO LEAVE AT HOME

For your safety and comfort, please leave the following at home:

- ❌ **JEWELRY AND PIERCINGS:** All jewelry must be removed for surgery. Take piercings out ahead of time and leave them at home, along with any non-removable hairpieces and decorative items.
- ❌ **NAIL POLISH:** Please remove dark-colored polish. The pulse monitoring device placed on your finger during surgery does not work as accurately over dark polish or acrylic nails.
- ❌ **CASH AND VALUABLES:** Our staff cannot be responsible for personal valuables. Please leave these at home.
- ❌ **YOUR HOME MEDICATIONS:** Unless your pre-screening nurse specifically asked you to bring them, your care team will provide any medications you need during and after surgery.

FINAL REMINDERS BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

Refer to the pre-screening instructions provided by your nurse for specific guidance. In general, you should expect to:

- **STOP EATING AND DRINKING** at the time your pre-screening nurse provided. This includes water, candy, cough drops, mints, antacids, chewing gum, and any tobacco product. An empty stomach reduces the risk of nausea and vomiting under anesthesia.
- **AVOID SMOKING, VAPING, AND OTHER SUBSTANCES.** Do not smoke, vape, or use tobacco products, marijuana, nicotine pouches, or any illegal substances on the day of your surgery.
- **TAKE ONLY THE MEDICATIONS** your pre-screening nurse told you to take the morning of surgery, and only with a small sip of water.

- **DO NOT SHAVE** in or around the area where you will have surgery. If hair needs to be removed, our staff will do this safely with clippers on the day of your procedure.
- **TAKE YOUR CHG SHOWER** the evening before and the morning of your surgery, as instructed by your pre-screening nurse.
- **SKIP THE COLOGNE, PERFUME, LOTION, DEODORANT, AND MAKEUP** on the day of your surgery.
- **ARRIVE AT THE TIME YOUR PRE-SCREENING NURSE PROVIDED.**
This is usually about two hours before your scheduled surgery time.

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU ARRIVE

You will be brought into a preoperative area to be prepared for your procedure.

You will have the option to have two family members 18 years or older join you, or they may stay in the waiting area during some of your preparations. Before surgery, decide which family members or friends may wait with you until it is time for you to go to the operating room. Due to space and respect for other patients, only two family members are allowed in the room at a time. Parents and legal guardians may stay with their children throughout the preparation period.

IN THE PREOPERATIVE AREA

Your nurses and care team will introduce themselves and walk you through each step of your preparation. During this time, you can expect the following:

- The nurses and doctors will verify your name and date of birth, often more than once. This is one of the ways we ensure your safety.
- A name bracelet and an allergy bracelet will be placed on your arm after the information is confirmed.

- You will be asked to confirm the type of surgery you are having and the location on your body. You will be asked this more than once before surgery. This is another part of our safety process.
- Your surgical consent will be reviewed with you, and you will be asked to sign it if you have not already done so at your surgeon's office or during your pre-screening. Any other necessary forms will be signed at this time, before any medications are given.
- The staff will ask for the name and phone number of the family member or friend who is waiting for you. The hospital staff will also confirm you have a ride home and the phone number of the person taking you home.
- You will be asked to change into a hospital gown and non-slip socks. Your clothing will be placed in a bag for your family, or placed in a cubby at outpatient surgery.
- You may be asked to wipe your skin with special CHG wipes to further reduce your risk of infection.
- You will meet several members of our surgical team, including your preoperative nurse, your patient care tech, your anesthesiologist and members of the anesthesia team, members of the surgical team, and your surgeon.
- Your nurses and the anesthesia team will review your medical and surgical history. If you did not provide a medication list during pre-screening, please bring one with you on the day of surgery, including any over-the-counter medications, vitamins, supplements, herbal products, and any skin patch medications.
- Additional testing may be performed, if needed, based on your history.
- An IV will be started in your arm. This small plastic tube allows fluids and medications to be given during your surgery and recovery. If you have a known issue with IV access, please let the pre-screening team know during pre-screening so

arrangements can be made for the day of your surgery.

- Your surgeon may mark your surgical site with a skin marker.
- A protective paper hat will be placed over your hair. Everyone on your surgical team wears similar hats to help prevent infection.



MEETING YOUR ANESTHESIOLOGIST

Your anesthesiologist is the physician responsible for keeping you safe and comfortable throughout your surgery. They will review your medical history and physical condition before your procedure, monitor and treat you during surgery while providing anesthesia, and help manage your pain afterward.

Your anesthesiologist will explain the type of anesthesia planned for you and discuss the possible side effects. This is a good time to share any past experiences with anesthesia, including nausea or other reactions. You will sign a consent for anesthesia once all your questions have been answered. A member of your anesthesia team will stay with you for the entire procedure, until you are safely transferred to the recovery room.

IN THE OPERATING ROOM

The operating room is brightly lit and filled with specialized equipment. The room is intentionally kept cool to help maintain a sterile environment, so do not be surprised if you feel chilly when you first enter. Your team will provide warm blankets and explain everything they are doing as they move you from the stretcher to the operating table and connect you to the monitors.

You will not be alone at any point. Several members of your surgical team will be with you throughout your entire procedure.

For pediatric patients, parents are not permitted in the operating room but will be reunited with their child in the recovery room as soon as the child is awake and stable.

HOW LONG WILL MY SURGERY TAKE?

Your surgeon can give you an estimate of how long your procedure should take, though the actual time can vary based on your individual situation. You will be reunited with your family as soon as it is safe to do so after surgery.

AFTER YOUR SURGERY

Once your surgery is complete, your care team will take you to the recovery room or back to your preoperative room, depending on the type of anesthesia you received. Our nursing team will care for you as you wake up. Their focus is your comfort, your safety, and the management of any pain or nausea you may experience. For pediatric patients, one parent will be brought back to the recovery area once their child is awake.

IN THE RECOVERY ROOM

While you are in the recovery area, you can expect:

- Nursing staff will be at your side, controlling any pain or nausea and making sure you are as comfortable as possible.
- You will be connected to monitors that check your blood pressure, heart rate, breathing rate, and oxygen level frequently.
- A nurse will check your bandages, if you have any.
- You will be encouraged to take slow, deep breaths and to cough gently as you wake up.
- The nurse may give you something to drink when you are awake, depending on the type of surgery you had.
- If you use a CPAP or BiPAP machine to sleep at night for obstructive sleep apnea, your nurse may place it on you to assist your breathing until you are fully awake.
- After this initial phase of recovery, your nursing staff will prepare you to go home.

HOW LONG WILL I BE IN RECOVERY?

The time you spend in the recovery room varies. The type of surgery you had, the type of anesthesia used, and your body's response all play a role. Before your nurse moves you to the next stage of recovery, they will make sure you are waking up easily, moving around on your own, breathing well, coughing easily, and that your blood pressure and heart rate are similar to what they were before surgery.

HOW ELSE MIGHT I FEEL IN RECOVERY?

It is common to feel drowsy, have blurred vision for a short time, and experience a dry mouth after surgery because of the medications you received. Shivering and a sore throat are also common side effects after anesthesia. You will be given something to drink as soon as it is safe, based on the type of surgery you had. Pediatric patients are typically offered juice or a popsicle to start with in the recovery area.

WILL I FEEL SICK TO MY STOMACH?

Nausea is a possible side effect of surgery and anesthesia. If you feel queasy, your nurse will provide medication to help manage your nausea and prevent vomiting.

SEEING YOUR FAMILY AGAIN

Your family will be brought to the discharge area as soon as you are awake and feeling comfortable. Visitors in recovery are limited to two adults over the age of 18. Parents of children may join their child in the recovery room as soon as they wake up.

WILL MY DOCTOR TALK WITH ME IN RECOVERY?

It is possible your doctor will come see you in recovery. However, because the medications you received during surgery can have an amnesic effect, meaning they may make it hard to remember conversations afterward, your doctor will also speak with your family after surgery to provide details about your operation. Your nurse will give you and your family further instructions before you go home.

WILL I HAVE PAIN AFTER SURGERY?

Some pain or discomfort is expected after any surgery. Your care team will check in with you frequently, using a scale from 0 to 10 to understand how you are feeling, where 0 means no pain and 10 means the worst pain you have ever experienced.



We may use other tools beyond medication to help manage your discomfort. Our goal is to keep you as comfortable as possible while you recover, and we will work with you, your anesthesia team, and your surgeon to find the safest and most effective approach.

BEFORE YOU GO HOME

Before discharge, you can expect the following:

- You will move to a second recovery area where your family can stay with you.
- You may be offered something to drink and a light snack.
- Depending on your surgery and anesthesia, you may need to urinate before you are cleared to go home.
- You and your family member will receive written discharge instructions, which the nurse will review with you. The instructions are written down because the medications you received can affect your memory. Your nurse will also explain the instructions to your family member or other responsible adult.

THE NURSE WILL GO OVER:

- When to restart your usual medications
- When you may shower, if your doctor has provided that instruction
- How to care for any bandages or drains you have
- Any activity restrictions
- Signs of infection to watch for
- When to follow up with your surgeon
- Any other instructions specific to your care

You will dress in your own clothes when you are ready to leave. The outpatient surgery staff will take you to your car in a wheelchair. You may still feel drowsy at the time of departure.

We want you to be safe and to recover well after surgery, so you may not drive yourself home. The medications you received make driving unsafe for at least 24 hours. If you do not have a responsible adult to take you home, your surgery may need to be cancelled.

YOUR RECOVERY AT HOME

Your recovery continues at home. The medications you received, and any post-surgical pain may continue to leave you feeling drowsy and a little foggy for a day or two. Please give yourself permission to rest.

THE FIRST 24 HOURS:

Do not make any plans for the day of your surgery. Arrange for someone to stay with you for at least the first 24 hours after surgery to help care for you.



DO NOT | AFTER SURGERY

For your safety, during the first 24 hours after surgery, you should not:

-  Drive
-  Take any drugs that are not prescribed to you
-  Sign any important papers
-  Drink alcohol
-  Make any important decisions

If you use a CPAP or BiPAP machine, please continue to use it for naps as well as overnight. The medications you received can temporarily worsen sleep apnea, and consistent use of your machine helps you breathe safely while you recover.

Follow the discharge instructions you received from your doctor and nurse carefully. These will cover what to eat and drink, what medications to take, any limits on your activity, how to care for your surgical site or bandages, and when to follow up with your surgeon.

QUESTIONS AFTER YOU GO HOME?

Refer to your written discharge instructions, or call your surgeon's office, if you have questions after you return home. You will also receive a follow-up call from one of our nurses in the days after your procedure to check on your recovery and answer any questions that have come up since you left outpatient surgery.





WHAT EVERY FAMILY WANTS TO KNOW

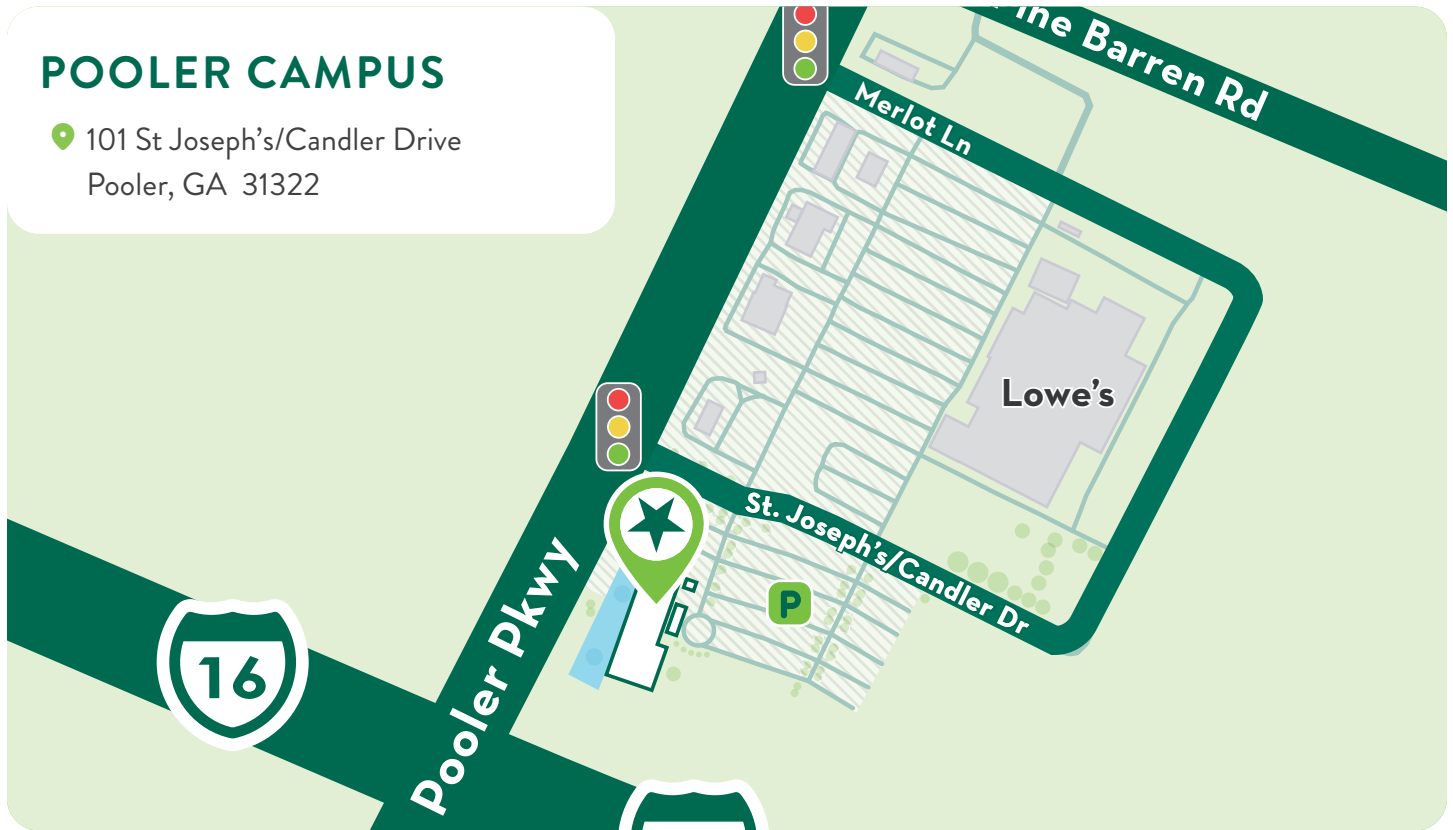
Your family and loved ones are an important part of your care and recovery. The information below will help them know what to expect on the day of your surgery and how they can best support you.

- Check the map to know where to park.
- Leave any large bags or overnight items in the car until you know where your loved one will be after surgery.
- Your loved one will go back to the preoperative area first to begin preparations. Up to two family members 18 years or older will then be called back to wait with them until it is time for surgery.
- During surgery, you will wait in the surgery waiting room. Complimentary Wi-Fi is available. You may want to bring a sweater, since waiting areas can feel cool, and something to read.
- The staff will ask you to provide a phone number before surgery begins, so the doctor can reach you if you step away from the waiting room when surgery is complete. Please stay within the facility while your loved one is in surgery.
- After surgery is complete, the doctor will speak with you and provide an update. Because the medications received during surgery can make your loved one drowsy and forgetful, the doctor may share information with you before your loved one is fully awake.
- The anesthesia and nursing teams remain with your loved one throughout the entire procedure.
- When it is time to leave, the nurse will give written discharge instructions and review them with you and your loved one. If the doctor has left any prescriptions, you will receive them at that time. Some doctors e-prescribe prescriptions directly to your preferred pharmacy on file. If you have questions about obtaining prescriptions after surgery, please contact your doctor.
- Your loved one will be taken to your car in a wheelchair by outpatient surgery staff when it is time to leave.
- Please plan for someone to stay with your loved one for the first 24 hours after surgery.
- Your loved one should not make any plans for the day of surgery so they can rest.
- Cell phone use is restricted in certain patient care areas of outpatient surgery.
- St. Joseph's/Candler is a tobacco- and smoke-free campus. Smoking and the use of any tobacco product, including vaping, is not permitted anywhere inside the facility or on hospital property.
- If you or your loved one have any questions or concerns during your time at outpatient surgery, please share them with your nurse or any staff member. We are here to help.

MAPS

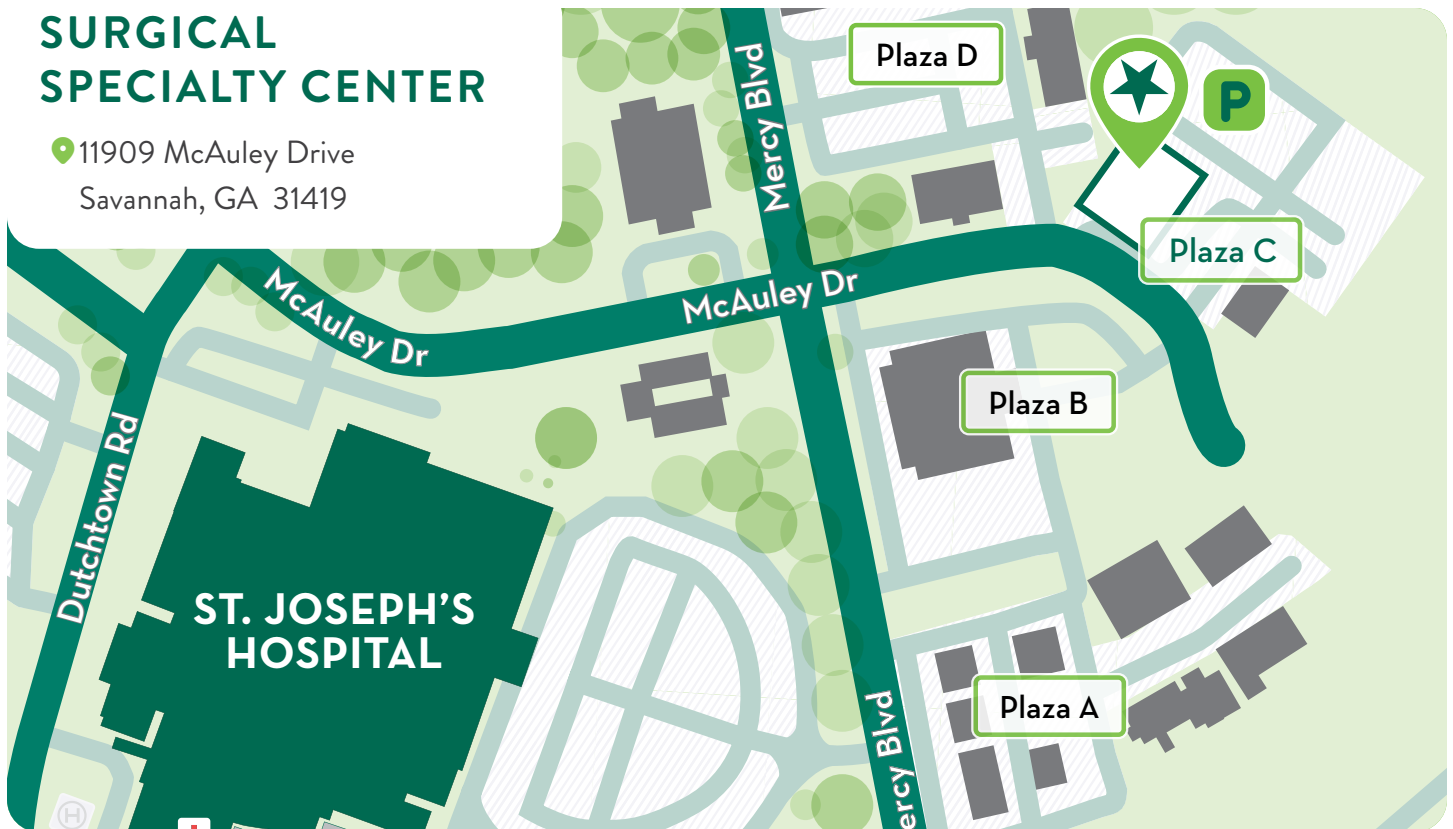
POOLER CAMPUS

101 St Joseph's/Candler Drive
Pooler, GA 31322



SURGICAL SPECIALTY CENTER

11909 McAuley Drive
Savannah, GA 31419



Patient & Visitor Parking



POOLER CAMPUS

📍 101 St Joseph's/Candler Drive
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📞 PRE-SCREENING: (912) 819-6757 • OUTPATIENT SURGERY: (912) 819-8100

St. Joseph's/Candler is the recipient of the National Magnet Award for Nursing Excellence.