

PREPARING FOR SUCCESSFUL SURGERY

If you are going to have surgery, you may feel a little afraid or worried. Remember, you are taking an important step in your health and healing. Relaxation to prepare for surgery can help you feel calmer and more comfortable. Relaxing can also help you get better faster and spend less time in the hospital.

Using Kaiser Permanente's *Preparing for Successful Surgery* program can help you before and after your surgery. The program is available on CD or as a podcast. It has three main parts: guided imagery, affirmations and calming music.

GUIDED IMAGERY

Guided imagery is a gentle but powerful way to positively guide your mind. It helps you have a more positive surgery experience. You use all of your senses (sight, touch, smell, and sound) to create positive images. Almost anyone can do it.

Guided imagery works because you relax your mind and body. This helps you feel more in control.

1. Mind/Body connection: Your thoughts, feelings, and moods have a big effect on your health. To the body, images created in the mind can be almost like real events. The body does not know the difference. This is the mind/body connection.

2. Relaxation: Listening to music and a calming voice relaxes your mind and body. When you are relaxed, you are better able to create healing images that help a speedy recovery.

3. Sense of control: Feeling in control can lead to a positive outlook and help you feel better.

Create a relaxed state of mind by using the mind-body connection, relaxation and your sense of control. The body sees these qualities as real and helps prepare you for a quicker recovery.

AFFIRMATIONS

Affirmations are short statements that help you feel more in control. They give your body specific healing instructions. They help you focus on positive expectations, such as decreased discomfort, shorter healing time and less pain. Here are some examples of affirmations:

- ❖ *I am confident that everything will be fine.*
- ❖ *I am focusing on my own inner peace.*
- ❖ *I have little discomfort.*
- ❖ *I am recovering quickly and easily.*

Try the affirmations on the CD or podcast or come up with your own. They will relax you during surgery and lessen any physical and mental stress.

“Relaxation, imagery, and affirmations have been shown to decrease pain and use of pain medications after surgery, and speed recovery.”

—Dr. Harley Goldberg, Director,
Complementary & Alternative Medicine

TIPS FOR USING THE CD

Find a place to sit or lay quietly for 20 to 40 minutes. Get comfortable, but not enough to fall asleep. If you can, listen to the guided imagery program with headphones.

This will work best in a relaxed atmosphere. Don't worry about doing things perfectly. The more you listen, the easier it will be to relax and calm your mind.

Listen to the program and allow yourself to follow the suggestions you hear.

- Listen to track 1 (*Introduction to Guided Imagery*) once.
- Then, listen to track 2 (*Imagery for Surgery*) and track 3 (*Affirmations*) twice a day on each of the days leading up to your surgery.
- After surgery, listen to track 3 (*Affirmations*) and track 4 (*Imagery for Healing*) twice a day, every day, until you feel better. It might take days or weeks.
- Track 5 has relaxing music that can help you relax and sleep. Listen to track 5 as much as you want during the days before and after your surgery. If it is possible, you may want to listen to track 5 on headphones during your surgery.

IMAGERY RESULTS

Research shows that patients using imagery may be able to leave the hospital and go home more quickly than those who do not use imagery. They may also have less discomfort and feel more relaxed.

For example, in one study 130 patients scheduled for surgery were divided into two groups. Group 1 did not use the CD. Group 2 listened to the *Preparing for Successful Surgery* CD for three days before and for six days after surgery.

The group that listened to the CD said that they had less discomfort and used less pain medicine after surgery. In fact, those who listened to the program had less pain on the first day after surgery than the other group felt on the sixth day after surgery.

"I was wondering how this program would help me heal. I was surprised at how relaxed it made me feel. Because of it, I had little pain and a successful surgery."

– Kaiser Permanente surgery patient

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor.

AT THE HOSPITAL

You can listen to the program while waiting for surgery and, depending on the operation, in the recovery room after surgery. If you need a CD player, ask your doctor, nurse or a friend if you can borrow one. Ask your doctor or nurse if you can listen during surgery.

After your surgery, listen to the program until you feel better. Ask a friend or family member to help you if you need them to.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Getting support from others can make you more comfortable before, during, and after surgery. Ask a close friend or family member to come with you or visit you. Talk to your doctors and nurses. Ask questions. We are here to help you prepare and recover from your surgery.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Visit your physician's Home Page at kp.org/mydoctor, and find all available podcasts at kp.org/listen. Search "mind-body health" to look at the Mind & Body Health Featured Health Topic.

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A program of guided imagery, affirmations, and music to create a sense of control and speed recovery

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