



Elective Surgery Admissions

Patient Guide



Western Health

CALL FOR HELP

If you're worried, we're worried.

We understand you know your family member or friend better than we do.

If you or your family and friends notice something has changed about you or is 'not quite right' and feel worried – we want you to let us know.

What to do if you are worried

1



Talk to your nurse/midwife or doctor about your concerns.

2



Talk to the Nurse or Midwife in Charge of the ward about your concerns.

3



If these nurses, midwives or doctors cannot help then please call 03 8345 HELP (03 8345 4357)

Your Call for Help will be directed to someone who can help.



Western Health

WELCOME TO WESTERN HEALTH

Western Health is a large organisation consisting of more than 6,000 staff that work each day to improve the overall health of people across Melbourne's West.

We offer a wide range of services to care for our patients at our public hospitals, which include: Footscray Hospital, Sunshine Hospital, Williamstown Hospital, and Sunbury Day Hospital

Footscray Hospital

Emergency Department, Intensive and Coronary Care, General and Specialist Acute Medical and Surgical. Aged Care, Specialist Diagnostic Services, Community Health Clinics (incorporating diabetes management, Sleep Disorder Treatment, Oncology and Drug and Alcohol services).

Sunshine Hospital

Maternity Services (pre and post natal care, sleep settling and breastfeeding support). Special Care Nursery, Emergency Department, General Acute Medical and Surgical. Women's Health Services, Dialysis, Palliative Care, Community Rehabilitation, Aged Care, Children's Surgical Services, Children's Ward, Specialist Diagnostic Services and Community Health.

Williamstown Hospital

Emergency Department, General Acute Medical and Surgical Services, Community Rehabilitation, Aged Care (including geriatric care and evaluation) and Dialysis.

Sunbury Day Hospital

Renal dialysis and chemotherapy services, two operating theatres for day procedures (Ophthalmology – Cataract Surgery, and General Surgery) Endoscopy services and a range of specialist outpatient clinics

Charter of Healthcare Rights

1. **Access** - You have the right to the health care you need
2. **Safety** - You have the right to safe and good health care
3. **Respect** - You have the right to be respected regardless of your culture, gender or ability.
4. **Communication** - You have the right to good communication and to ask questions
5. **Participation** - You have the right to be involved in decisions about your care and treatment
6. **Privacy** - You have the right to say what happens to your personal health information
7. **Comment** - You have the right to give positive or negative feedback, make complaints or give compliments about your care

How you can help

- Tell us if you think we have made a mistake
- Give us information about your medical history
- Ask questions if we have not explained things to you
- Tell us how we can improve
- Tell us what we are doing well
- Ask for an interpreter if you need one

If you would like a copy of the Charter of Healthcare Rights please ask a staff member.

It is also available on

- Our website www.wh.org.au
- Around the hospital
- In 25 community languages
- In Braille
- By calling 8345 1302
- From the Patient Advocate

Elective Surgery Wait List

After being told by your doctor that you need a procedure/operation you will be placed on a waiting list for this procedure. The Department of Health has developed an elective surgery waiting list policy, which your doctor at Western Health uses to determine the urgency of your procedure/operation. Your doctor will place you in one of the following categories:

Category 1: Admission within 30 days is expected for a condition that has the potential to deteriorate quickly to the point that it might become an emergency.

Category 2: Admission within 90 days is expected.

Category 3: Admission within 365 days is expected.

The timelines provided by the Department of Health are desirable time frames. Western Health aims to treat patients within these time frames; however, from time to time we may not be successful due to more urgent cases requiring medical attention.

When will I receive a booking date?

Once you have been placed on the Elective Surgery Wait List for your procedure, Western Health will be in contact with you when a date becomes available. This may mean that our booking officer may not contact you for quite some time. **To prevent any further delays you must notify the Elective Surgery Booking Office of any changes to your mailing address or contact numbers.** Please contact the Elective Surgery Booking Office (8345 1947) if you no longer require or want your procedure/operation

Do I have to take the date that is offered?

Western Health will aim to give you adequate notice prior to your procedure. If you are unable to attend your booking you must notify the Elective Surgery Booking Office (8345 1947) as soon as possible. All attempts to provide a new booking at the earliest date will be made. Please ensure that our booking staff are kept up to date with current contact details. At the end of this brochure you will find the elective surgery booking office contact address, phone contact etc. Please note that you may be removed from the waiting list if you postpone your procedure or fail to attend on two occasions or tell us that you will not be available for treatment for a long period of time. Not all surgery is performed at all hospital locations; so you may not have a choice about which campus your procedure/operation will be.



Interpreter Service

Western Health appreciates that relatives like to help in any way that they can and will often offer their services to interpret during a medical consultation. Because we are discussing your medical condition, it is more appropriate that we provide you with an interpreter who can help you understanding the surgery that you are about to have. Your relatives are welcome to attend clinic / future appointments with you however; we ask that you let our staff know that you will need an Interpreter.

Overseas Visitor/Student – Medicare Ineligible

If you are visiting from another country, you will need to pay for services received at our hospital.

Uninsured

If you do not have private health insurance, you are required to pay for all hospital costs. Please contact Patient Accounts to discuss the cost of your surgery and arrange upfront payment of your surgery on 8345 6915.

Details about Western Health Overseas Medicare Ineligible patient Fees can be found on our website - visit https://www.westernhealth.org.au/PatientsandVisitors/Medicare_Ineligible/

Insured

If you have private health insurance, please contact Western Health Patient Accounts to assist with your claim on 03 8345 6915

Pre-admission Clinic

If it is required, Pre-admission Clinic staff will talk to you about your health and may order extra tests before your surgery or procedure to make sure that everything is covered and you are well prepared before the day of your admission to the hospital.

Our aim is to ensure that you are in the best possible condition before your procedure or surgery, and that everything you may need for your recovery is ready and available for you, so you have the best possible outcome.

You will be contacted to discuss a time when you are able to:

- Take a phone call from clinic staff to discuss your health and needs
- Participate in Telehealth Video consultation with our clinic staff or
- Come to the clinic at either Footscray or Sunshine Hospital, this will depend on your needs.

If you have a phone appointment/telehealth video call, you do not need to attend the hospital. The staff will ensure you have a good understanding of your care before and after your surgery or procedure. This is a good time to ask us any questions about your surgery or procedure.

How will Pre-Admission appointment work?

You may be seen by

- Nurses
- Doctors
- Anaesthetists
- Pharmacist
- Members of the Allied Health Team, for example the physiotherapist, and /or Occupational Therapist.

You may then be sent for some tests, such as:

- Pathology Tests (blood, urine)
- ECG
- Radiology

The doctors or the anaesthetist may also organise for you to have further testing at another time. For example: a lung function test, sleep study, or heart tests such an echocardiogram or stress test.

Do I need to do anything special for my pre-admission appointment?

NO. You do not need to fast for your pre-admission appointment. Eat normally and take your regular medications.

How long will it take?

Your pre-admission appointment can take up to 3-4 hours, so please allow plenty of time, especially for parking and childcare.

What do I need to bring to my Pre-admission Appointment?

- Any current X-rays, scans, pathology, or recent test results from your GP relating to your surgery.
- All medications you are taking in original packaging, including over the counter medications, vitamins, minerals and herbal supplements.
- If you have a pacemaker, bring in details of your pacemaker and last pacemaker check.
- Any details of Specialist Doctors you have you seen. For example: Heart Specialist (Cardiologist) etc.



If you require an interpreter please call us before you appointment so we can book one in your language.

Family Support Volunteer for Families

This program supports families with children who are admitted for a surgical procedure. The volunteer would stay with the family and provide distraction activities to the child, while supporting the family. This relaxes the child and aids cooperation. If the child is relaxed the parents will also be more relaxed. This program runs Monday to Friday and all volunteers have undergone a police, reference and working with children's check. Please let a staff member know on admission if you wish to use this program.

Day Procedure Unit (DPU)

Patients admitted to the Day Procedure Unit minor surgical procedures for Endoscopy, or medical interventions that will be discharged on the same day. **You may have a light anaesthetic as part of the procedure and if so, you will not be able to drive home. You will also need to have a responsible adult accompany you home and stay with you overnight. If you are unable to arrange this, your procedure may be cancelled.**

Wards

In some cases you may need to stay overnight for several days. On admission staff will discuss your discharge day and time with you. It is important that you have arranged to be picked up by 10am.

Smoke Free Information

Western Health is committed to providing staff, patients, visitors, volunteers and contractors with a healthy, clean and safe environment.

Western Health is proud to be "Smoke Free", which means that smoking is prohibited (No Smoking) inside and outside the hospital, including the surrounding grounds and car parks.

Patients will be offered Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) on admission to assist with controlling smoking during their stay.

It is expected that all patients and visitors respect and comply with our "Smoke Free" policy

Visiting Hours and Meals

Visitors are always welcome at our hospitals as they play an important part in the recovery and comfort of patients. Visiting hours are designed to allow for rest and adequate treatment, which are essential for good patient care; therefore we suggest that no more than two visitors visit a patient at any one time.

Please be reminded that most rooms are shared and therefore discretion and sensitivity are required at all times. We encourage you to be sensitive to the needs of other patients in your ward. We also ask that children be in the care of a responsible adult at all times.

Visiting Times

General: 2.00pm-8.00pm

Maternity: 2.00pm - 4.00pm, 6.30pm-8.00pm (partners or support person exempt)

Children's Ward: 10.30am-7.00pm (parents anytime)

Visitors are not permitted in the Day Procedure Unit due to patient privacy and the location near the Operating Theatre. Modifications to this rule can be arranged for those requiring carer support for medical reasons.

Visiting hours vary throughout the hospitals, so please check with the Nurse Unit Manager on the ward that you are visiting. Some wards are flexible in their visiting hours.

For more information about visiting hours contact your hospital's switchboard.

Footscray Hospital - 8345 6666, Sunshine Hospital - 8345 1333, Williamstown Hospital - 9393 0100

Meals

The hospital provides a choice of meals and will supply special diets as part of your medical care or to meet your cultural needs. Hot and cold drinks are available at morning tea, afternoon tea and supper. Although it may not be possible to cater for every culture or nationality, relatives or friends may be able to bring culturally appropriate foods from home for patients. All visitors need to check with nursing staff before bringing food from home to make sure that it does not interfere with the patient's treatment and recovery.

While you are staying overnight with us at Western Health, you have the option to self-order your meals via our new app CBORD Patient. This free and secure app can be downloaded on any smartphone or tablet or alternatively can be accessed at <https://patient.cbord.com/>. If you are unable to use the app your family or carer could order for you; even from outside the hospital.

We recommend setting up your account on the app prior to your admission. You will need the facility ID which is **Whealth** and your hospital medical record number (or UR number), but you will only be able to order a meal after you have been admitted.

Pastoral Care

Our Pastoral Care and Chaplaincy Service provides patients and their families with spiritual support to help them face changes and challenges that may be experienced in hospital.

On-site Chaplains and Pastoral Carers are trained to:

- Provide confidential listening support
- Help identify spiritual needs and resources and access the support these can provide
- Help explore a sense of Meaning, the Sacred, or God, in what is happening.

Halal, Kosher and vegetarian meals are available on our hospital menus.

Bibles and Korans in different languages are available for use in our hospital prayer rooms. There are also Prayer Mats and Sacred Scriptures available for use.

Members of the Pastoral Care Team visit all wards most days of the week and hold weekly prayer services.

Western Health also provides bedside Holy Communion and other Sacraments which are available on request in the Anglican, Orthodox, and Roman Catholic traditions and has played host to weddings and baptisms.

Why has my procedure been cancelled?

To avoid cancellation, it is very important to confirm your booking date as soon as possible when you receive your admission letter. The decision to cancel a procedure is one that is not made lightly. As we are a large organisation with a large Emergency Department, our service capacities change constantly. This means that although a bed has been booked for you, the bed may no longer be available due to other patients requiring emergency procedures. In this instance you will be notified as early possible and a new time and new procedure date and time will be sent to you as soon as possible. You would receive a letter outlining pre-operative details including fasting times. It is important to adhere to these times otherwise your procedure may be cancelled.

My health is declining what should I do?

If you are worried about your health it is important that you return to your General Practitioner immediately or present to the nearest hospital Emergency Department.

It is important that you keep us up to date with your current health status and let us know at any time if your health has deteriorated as, you may need to be reviewed by our medical staff. If it has been over 12 months since your last appointment, you will need a new referral for your Outpatients appointment, which you can obtain from your local General Practitioner. This can be faxed to the Outpatients Department on 8345.6856. Outpatients will then contact you in writing with an appointment. Alternatively, if you have a current referral, please contact the Outpatients Department on 8345.6490 to make an appointment.

Am I able to use my private health insurance?

You can elect to be admitted as either a public or private patient in a public hospital. Western Health will cover your private health insurance excess up to \$500. For any amount above \$500, you will be charged by Western Health after your discharge.

Prior to electing to be a private patient please talk to your private health insurance to understand if your surgery is included in your health insurance cover.

Surgical Site Infection Prevention

What is a Surgical Site Infection (SSI)?

A surgical site infection is an infection that occurs after surgery in the part of the body where the surgery took place. Most patients who have surgery do not develop an infection. However, infections develop in about 1 to 3 out of every 100 patients who have surgery.

Some of the common symptoms of a surgical site infection are:

- Redness and pain around the area where you had surgery
- Drainage of cloudy fluid from your surgical wound
- Fever

What can I do to help prevent SSIs?

Before your surgery:

- Tell your doctor about other medical problems you may have. Health problems such as allergies, diabetes, and obesity could affect your surgery and your treatment.
- Quit smoking. Patients who smoke get more infections. Talk to your doctor about how you can quit before your surgery.
- Do not shave near where you will have surgery. Shaving with a razor can irritate your skin and make it easier to develop an infection.

At the time of your surgery:

- Ask if you will get antibiotics before surgery.

After your surgery:

- Make sure that your healthcare providers clean their hands before examining you; either with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.

If you do not see your providers clean their hands, please ask them to do so.

- Family and friends who visit you should not touch the surgical wound or dressings.
- Family and friends should clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after visiting you. If you do not see them clean their hands, ask them to do so.

What do I need to do when I go home from the hospital?

- Before you go home, your doctor or nurse should explain everything you need to know about taking care of your wound. Make sure you understand how to care for your wound before you leave the hospital.
- Always clean your hands before and after caring for your wound.
- Before you go home, make sure you know whom to contact if you have questions or problems after you get home.
- If you have any symptoms of an infection, such as redness and pain at the surgery site, drainage, or fever above 37.5°C, call your doctor immediately.

What are some of the things that hospitals are doing to prevent SSIs?

To prevent SSIs, doctors, nurses, and other healthcare providers:

- Clean their hands and arms up to their elbows with an antiseptic agent just before the surgery.
- Clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after caring for each patient.
- May remove some of your hair immediately before your surgery using electric clippers if the hair is in the same area where the procedure will occur. They should not shave you with a razor.
- Wear special hair covers, masks, gowns, and gloves during surgery to keep the surgery area clean.
- Give you antibiotics before your surgery starts. In most cases, you should get antibiotics within 60 minutes before the surgery starts and the antibiotics should be stopped within 24 hours after surgery.
- Clean the skin at the site of your surgery with a special soap that kills germs.

If you have additional questions, please ask your doctor or nurse.

What do I need to do and bring with me to prepare for my hospital stay?

Please bring all relevant information including:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medicare Card• Private Health Insurance details• DVA Card• Pension / Concession card	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety Net card or Seniors Health card• TAC claim details• Workcover claim details
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Other important personal items that you need to bring include:

- All current medications including herbal medication
- All relevant x-rays, scans
- Health aids (i.e. walking frame, hearing aid, glasses etc.)

If you are staying overnight please bring the following items:

- Essential medical equipment e.g.: CPAP machine
- Underwear/briefs
- Loose comfortable clothing and sleep wear for hospital
- Incontinence pads (if required)
- Toiletries – including toothpaste, soap, deodorant, sanitary products etc.
- Non-slip footwear

Please do not bring in jewellery or valuables. Mobile phones and electronic gear will NOT be the responsibility of the hospital.

Please take time to complete the “My Checklist” provided in this brochure before coming to hospital as it will ensure you have a comfortable and safe hospital stay.

Patient Luggage Requirements

When being admitted to the hospital, you are allowed to bring with you a suitcase or bag which is **less than 10kg** in weight. Any luggage that exceeds this weight limit may not be accepted by the staff. This is to ensure that staff are not injured while handling heavy patient luggage.

Please bring your own reusable bag for your clothing.

Acceptable

A small over night suitcase or a bag/s weighing less than 10kg in total



Not Acceptable

Large suitcases, bags & items weighing more than 10kg in total



My Checklist

Pre Surgery:

- I have confirmed my attendance at the Pre-admission Clinic appointment if required.
- I have organised someone to take me to hospital and collect me when I am discharged before 10am.
- I have arranged for someone to stay with me if I am discharged on the same day or if I am discharged at a later time.
- I have organised a neighbour / next of kin / friend to look after my home and collect my mail.
- I have packed all current medications.

Day of Surgery:

- I have medically prepared for my surgery as advised by the pre-admission staff.
- I have followed all the fasting instructions carefully and I am fully fasted.
- I have left all valuables safely with family / friends / home rather than bringing them into hospital.
- I have packed loose comfortable clothing and sleep wear and non-slip footwear for hospital (maximum 10kg).
- I have packed adequate toiletries for my inpatient stay.

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How do I get to Hospital?

Footscray Hospital:



Footscray Hospital is located on Gordon Street Footscray. Limited car parking is available for an hourly fee, as well as short-term parking (5 minutes) which is located near the front entrance. If you are travelling by train, the nearest station is Middle Footscray or alternatively you can get on Tram No 82 or Bus No 410 (Paisley Street) and get off at the corner of Gordon Street and Ballarat Road.

Sunshine Hospital:



Sunshine Hospital is located at 176 Furlong Road, St Albans. Limited car parking is available for an hourly fee as well as short-term parking (10 minutes) which is located near the front entrance. If you are travelling by train the nearest station is Ginifer on the Sydenham line and is just 10 minutes walk to Sunshine Hospital. Buses also regularly travel past the hospital.

The Williamstown Hospital:



The Williamstown Hospital is located on Railway Crescent, Williamstown. Free car parking is available opposite the main entrance of the hospital in Railway Crescent, with limited spaces also available on Stewart Street. If you are travelling by train, the nearest station is Williamstown Beach, which is located across the road from the hospital. Bus stops for Route 471 are located on Osborne Street at the rear of the hospital, and on nearby Victoria Street.

Sunbury Day Hospital:



The Sunbury Day Hospital is located at 7 Macedon St Sunbury. Free car parking is available within the hospital site. If you are travelling by train, the nearest station is Sunbury Train Station (V line Services) and is just 10 minutes walk to Sunbury Day Hospital. The bus stop for Sunbury Bus Line number 486 to Rolling Meadows is located about 20 metres from the front driveway of the facility.



Western Health

Together, caring for the West

FOOTSCRAY HOSPITAL

Gordon Street
Footscray VIC 3011
Phone: 8345 6666
Fax: 9317 7815

WILLIAMSTOWN HOSPITAL

Railway Crescent
Williamstown VIC 3016
Phone: 9393 0100
Fax: 9317 0186

SUNSHINE HOSPITAL

Furlong Road
St Albans VIC 3021
Phone: 8345 1333
Fax: 8345 0284

SUNBURY DAY HOSPITAL

7 Macedon Street
Sunbury VIC 3429
Phone: 9732 8600
Fax: 9732 8605

ELECTIVE BOOKINGS OFFICE

PO Box 294
St Albans VIC 3021
Phone: 8345 1947
Fax: 8345 1152

ENDOSCOPY BOOKINGS OFFICE

PO Box 294
St Albans VIC 3021
Phone: 8345 6015
Fax: 83457378

electivebookings@wh.org.au

www.westernhealth.org.au