

Going into Hospital

Making the Journey Easy for You—and Your Body

[You may already know some of what's written here, and some may be new and possibly helpful for you. This information has been used to support many people, both before and after their operations.]

First of all - please remember that the nursing staff, doctors and surgeons will use all their dedication, skill, medical knowledge and experience to take the very best care of you.

One of the most important steps *you* can take is—as much as you can— to make friends with your body...by being kind and gentle in thought, word and deed, and by treating your body as if he or she is your best friend. The more you do this before, during and after your hospital stay, the more easily your body will be able to handle the whole experience. *Loving and respecting your body can make the greatest change to your health—and to your life.*

Before You Go Into Hospital

You will receive lots of information from your medical team, so use this to talk to your body about what she or he can expect to happen. Tell your body that it's ok for him or her to feel a bit scared, and reassure and comfort her or him (again, just as you would a good friend—or a small child).

In your imagination, go through the whole process—from admittance to recuperation. This will give your body some idea of what to expect, and will help the whole experience seem not quite so scary (even if we can't admit to others that we are scared, it's ok to admit it to ourselves).

The Anaesthetic

Anaesthetic separates your waking awareness from your body, so he or she won't feel pain during the operation (thanks goodness!). While this is a very good thing, it means you have absolutely no control over what happens, and that's a big part of why operations are scary. Tell your body what's going to happen and why, and how much better she or he will feel once your healing is underway. Reassure your body that you trust your surgical team to do the very best for you and for him or her.

After Your Operation

Post-Op 'Blues'...You may experience a brief period of depression about 3-4 days after your op. This is when adrenalin caused by stress in the lead-up to your operation leaves your system and leaves you feeling empty and sad. This is very normal, and if it does happen for you, please know it will be gone quickly.

You can help speed up your recovery by asking your body to release the trauma of the operation as well as any remnants and after-effects of the anaesthetic as quickly and completely as she or he can. You can consciously breathe them out—and you can also do this with all your worries, fears and concerns. These 'releasings' are important parts of your recovery process—for both you *and* your body.

You will support any pain medication you receive by sending love and comfort to your body as he or she adjusts to starting your healing journey together. Please let kindness and patience walk the journey with you and be your companions.

Please remember that it's absolutely normal to feel apprehensive about any operation, and that everyone involved has as their greatest concern your wellbeing and swift recovery.