

Before You Agree to a Procedure

Use this worksheet to ask about benefits, risks, alternatives, recovery, and costs before planned care.

Important: This worksheet is for general educational purposes only. It is not medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Talk with a qualified healthcare professional about your personal situation. If you may be having a medical emergency, call 911 or your local emergency number.

What to understand

- What problem is this procedure meant to address?
- Is it diagnostic, preventive, corrective, or symptom-relieving?
- What benefit should I realistically expect?
- How soon might I notice a benefit?
- How will we measure whether it worked?
- What happens if I choose to wait?
- Is this urgent, time-sensitive, or elective?

Risks and alternatives

- What are the common risks or side effects?
- What serious risks are possible?
- Are there risks because of my age, medications, medical history, allergies, or other conditions?
- Are there less invasive options?
- Are medication, therapy, lifestyle, monitoring, or watchful-waiting options reasonable?
- Why do you recommend this option over the others?

Procedure and recovery

- Who will perform the procedure?
- How often do they perform this procedure?
- Where will it be done?
- Will I need someone to drive me home?
- How long is typical recovery?
- When can I return to work, exercise, driving, lifting, or normal activities?
- What symptoms afterward should prompt a call?

