

## What to Do When Surgical Procedures Are Uncomfortable

Cardiovascular disease from cholesterol, impacted wisdom teeth and hemorrhoids, are but three conditions that can send you off to a surgeon, but if the surgeon isn't the right one for you, the results could be disastrous.

A surgery going wrong has to be one of the worst medical nightmares most people will ever see. The bare possibility of this happening is enough to frighten anyone. Therefore it helps to understand precisely what is going on, and to understand exactly what your rights are in any given medical situation.

### **Most surgical theaters in the world have a patient's bill of rights.**

Always check to see if any given hospital has a patient's bill of rights and, if they do, ask for a copy. If they don't have one, find a new hospital. As long as the hospital has this standard in place, they hold all of their doctors to it, so your surgeon will be bound by it. If, however, your surgeon operates out of an independent office, ask for the bill of rights directly from his or her office staff, and again, if it is not available, find a new surgeon. On the patient bill of rights is a very clear right to informed consent clause. What this means is that as long as you are an adult of sound mind, you have the indisputable right to fully understand any medical procedure that is performed on you. If the patient is not an adult of sound mind, then the right to informed consent reverts to the patient's guardian. No matter how many times you need it explained, or no matter in how much detail, you have the right to ask for it. In addition, you have the right to respect for your dignity. No one should ever use your lack of understanding to make you feel inferior or as if you're taking up too much time.

### **Concurrently with a patient's bill of rights usually comes a list of patient's responsibilities,**

and respect for medical staff is on that list of responsibilities. That means that no matter how frustrated you get with any medical person, you do not have the right to scream at them, insult them, or belittle them. However, that is all that it means. As long as you keep your questions phrased in a polite manner and reasonable tone of voice, you have fulfilled your responsibility of respect and can ask as many as you need to fully understand everything in your treatment plan.

### **Your rights prior to surgery**

If asking questions does not make you comfortable for some reason, such as you think that the surgeon is sharp with you or isn't taking enough care, you have the right to not have the procedure done by that surgeon. Unless it is a flat-out medical emergency, you can stop any procedure any time before anesthesia is performed, even if it's the day of the procedure itself. If it is a life or death emergency, then they have the duty and responsibility to save your life, even if you don't want them to. However, hemorrhoids are not usually a life and death situation, and you probably have the time to find a surgeon with whom you are more comfortable. It's not a terribly good idea to wait until the last minute before you make this decision, but if you must then you must. Keep in mind that the hospital may charge you, and your insurance may not pay because you went against medical advice. Therefore, if you do this at the last minute you may foot the bill for anything the hospital did before you changed your mind. High medical bills are not fun, but you may find them preferable to the fear of a botched surgery.

### **Try and sort things out before surgery**

It is always more efficient and more helpful to everyone concerned if you ask enough questions at the beginning of your relationship with your surgeon to either be completely comfortable or to find another surgeon, but do not let that stand in the way of protecting yourself. If you are afraid that your surgeon is going to screw up your surgery, it is much kinder to both yourself and the doctor to find another surgeon than to sue for malpractice. If your discomfort is over something so elementary as you feel as though your dignity or person is not respected, you should find a new doctor immediately. However, if you are uncomfortable for any other reason, such as a particular surgeon's lack of practice with the particular procedure that you are having, or a perceived lack of knowledge or regard for your particular medical history, all of these are valid reasons to look elsewhere, no matter how far along in the process you are.

## About the Author

Donald writes considerably about surgery with [hemorrhoids](#), and [cholesterol](#) and [teeth](#), to name but a few.