



Preparing for Acoustic Neuroma Surgery

Prior to surgery

Stay fit / get active – walk and practice balance exercises. Also good nutrition, adequate sleep/rest and stress reduction techniques are great ways to prepare. How you enter surgery will impact how you recover from it.

What to bring to the hospital

- Bring a button/zip style shirt to wear home
- Bring your own pillow so you are comfortable
- Chap stick
- Face wipes
- Phone charger with a longer cord
- Fuzzy socks for when you're in bed
- Pajama pants (to wear under gown when walking with PT)
- Neck pillow for the ride home
- Notepad and pen, especially if you can't have a support person to ask questions of doctors, or also record what they say (voice memo).
- Bring a book or download music / podcasts that you find soothing or distracting. Know that you may or may not be able to enjoy it. Reading and/or music may be too much stimulation for eyes and ears post-surgery.
- Create a private Facebook group or a Caring Bridge page where you or a designated family member / friend can post updates for close family and friends. It can be overwhelming if you are receiving a lot of texts post-surgery.

Tips for returning home and prepping your space

- Prep your space in advance to be ready when you come home
- For your shower the following are helpful: shower chair, suction cup grab bars, baby shampoo, nonslip shower mats, loofah/bath brush with a handle
- Wedge pillows
- Gait belt may be helpful for balance and the hospital may send you home with one
- Your surgeon will have some temporary restrictions during recovery to reduce the risk of CSF leak (for example, no bending or lifting). Move commonly used items to a height where you don't have to bend and consider purchasing a grabber tool to help.

- Lighting is important - install nightlights for safety, balance is worse in the dark
- Expect some balance issues and use care when walking
- Some people experience nausea immediately after surgery due to general anesthesia and your anesthesia team will work hard to accommodate. If you experience nausea during your recovery, your physician will discuss helpful medications with you.
- It may be difficult to sleep, based on medicines, adjusted sleep schedule, finding a comfortable position, etc.
- Be prepared to sleep with your head elevated for a period of time (surgeon will provide time line) to avoid CSF (Cerebrospinal fluid) leak.
- Hydration helps! Have plenty of fluids (water, sports drinks, soups, popsicles) on hand – unless contraindicated, staying well hydrated will help not only with headaches but also energy levels.
- There may be a grieving process of losing hearing and the life you had before. Give yourself time for recovery – both physical as well as mental.
- Compile a list of specialists that you may need after surgery, such as a vestibular therapist, cognitive therapist, etc.
- Compile an Amazon wish list of items that you might need - eye patch, etc. so you can purchase quickly if needed.
- Keep an optimistic outlook – it will help with recovery. Know you have made the choice that was right for you, you have done all that is in your control, and you will adapt to whatever happens after.
- If you need to talk to someone, contact the ANA to help you find a peer match.

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ANA Volunteers

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