

Help Your Loved One Prepare for Surgery

- ✓ **Read the surgeon's pre-surgery instructions.** Help make sure your loved one follows these instructions "to the T!"
- ✓ **For 2 to 3 days before surgery, remind your loved one to shower with antibacterial hair and body soap, with a final shower just before going to the hospital.** (*Chlorhexidine soap is available at most drugstores — it's effective.*)
- ✓ If your loved one is having surgery on a "twin organ" (like kidneys or lungs), or on an arm or leg, help avoid confusion over which side requires surgery.
 - Put a large piece of duct tape (or masking tape) over the side that should NOT be cut. **Write a big, bold "NO!" on this tape for the side that should not be touched by the surgeon.**
- ✓ **Keep your loved one warm.** In cold weather, warm up the car first. Make sure hair is dry. Bring an extra sweater or other soft, warm clothing. (*Hospitals have some very chilly areas.*)
- ✓ **Fill out a medication record with your loved one. Bring it to the hospital with all of your loved one's current medications.**
- ✓ **Prepare to stay with your loved one 24/7 while hospitalized.**
 - It's OK to ask for help — organize "shifts" with other family members and friends.