



Sairaala
Nova

Guidebook for Surgical Patients



Guidebook for Surgical Patients

The aim of this guidebook is to help you, your family and friends prepare for your surgery and recovery after it.

Your specialised healthcare surgeon has decided on the type of surgery you need. The appointment time for your surgery depends on its urgency. If you have not received a date for your surgery yet, we will contact you as soon as the time of the surgery is confirmed. If you have any questions related to your surgery, please contact us by phone or use the online form. You will find contact information on the back cover of this booklet.

- Please fill in the medical history form as soon as possible, as we need the information about your past medical history to plan for your surgery. You will find more instructions on the medical history form. You can find the online form here: www.sairaalanova.fi/esitietolomakkeet
- Please contact us if you experience any changes in your health, or if there are changes in the medicines that you are currently taking.
- If you already know the date of your operation, please let us know if you experience any flu symptoms (coughing, runny nose, fever), stomach flu symptoms (diarrhea, nausea, vomiting), or if you suffer from any open wounds or scratches before the surgery.

Getting ready for your surgery

Before the surgery your overall health should be as good as possible. If needed, staff at your local health care center can help you take care of any long-term illnesses, acute infections, or skin problems. Local healthcare centers can also offer you guidance on weight control and can help you with quitting smoking or using intoxicating substances.

On our website you will also find animations that can help you prepare for your surgery:
www.sairaaalanova.fi/animaatiot



1. Take care of your nutritional needs

Make sure to eat a balanced diet and pay special attention to your intake of vitamin D, calcium, and protein. Try to drink at least 1 – 1,5 litres of water, low-fat milk, buttermilk or other fluids every day. If your doctor has given you self-care instructions, make sure to follow them. A healthy nutritional status will help you recover from your operation, and help the wounds heal faster!

2. Stop taking nutrient supplements

Stop taking any nutritional supplements that include Omega-3 fatty acids at least two weeks before your operation as they increase the risk of bleeding during the surgery. We recommend that you stop taking all nutrient supplements, or herbal medicine products, at least seven days before your surgery. Many supplements increase the risk of bleeding and can cause unwanted side effects when used together with surgery-related medications. Please also remember to take these guidelines into account if you are on the waiting list for a possible cancellation.

3. Take care of your long-term illnesses

Having your long-term illnesses (such as insulin dependent diabetes) under control reduces surgery-related risks and helps you recover from your surgery.

4. Exercise regularly

We recommend that you exercise regularly, as being in good physical condition and having enough muscle strength helps you recover from your surgery faster. While you can exercise as much as your health allows, please remember to follow any instructions from your physiotherapist or doctor.

5. Quit smoking and using e-cigarettes and snus

Quit smoking and using nicotine products including e-cigarettes and snus as early as possible. You are not allowed to smoke or use e-cigarettes or snuff on the day of your surgery! Our hospital is completely smoke-free.

Smoking increases risks related to anesthesia, the surgery itself and hinders recovery:

- Surgery-related respiratory complications are five times more likely
- Greater risk of blood clots
- Wounds take longer to heal
- Increased risk of infections
- Weaker immune system, more prone to all types of infections

When you want to stop smoking:

- Decide on the day when you will quit.
- You can find stop smoking aids at your local health care station, such as information about nicotine replacement products, support groups and medications.
- Ask for help and support from your family members, friends, workmates, or call the stop-smoking-helpline, Stumppi (0800 148 484), free of charge from Mon–Tue 10–18, Thu at 13–16). For more information visit: www.stumppi.fi.
- Withdrawal symptoms usually start after 2–12 hours after your last cigarette. Withdrawal symptoms peak during the first week, and they can last from 3–4 weeks to several months.
- More information is available at:
https://www.hengitysliitto.fi/sites/default/files/oppaat/today_istheday.pdf

6. Quit all intoxicating substances

Avoid the use of alcohol before your surgery. It is strictly forbidden to come to the surgery under the influence of alcohol or drugs!

If you need support for quitting, please contact your local healthcare center.

It is important for you to quit using alcohol and drugs because:

- They may cause dangerous side effects when used together with surgery-related medications
- They increase the risk of accidents during the recovery period after your surgery
- Withdrawal symptoms hinder recovery and rehabilitation after your surgery

7. Take care of your mental health

Mental health is an important source of strength that will help you prepare for your surgery and the recovery period thereafter. Pain changes in your day-to-day life and the surgery itself may leave you feeling nervous, scared and anxious. It is a good idea to discuss these feelings with your friends and family. You can also contact your local healthcare center about these issues.

Take enough time for rest and sleep. Getting enough good-quality sleep will help you stay active and able to go about your day-to-day life, as well as recover after the surgery.

8. Plan ahead for the days after the surgery

Let your family and friends know about your upcoming surgery, as their support is very important during all stages of the process. Because the treatment time inside the hospital will be brief, discuss and plan what kind of support you may need at home while you recover from the surgery.

Think about the support and help you might need with your day-to-day activities at home. Try to plan ahead who will take care of the grocery shopping, who will cook and who will tidy the house while you recover.

It is a good idea to have an adult available to help you overnight at home if you are having outpatient surgery.

If you need outside help, contact the home care unit in your municipality. You can find the contact information from the telephone switchboard of your municipality, or you can look it up online. If you need assistive equipment (such as crutches or walkers), you can borrow them from your local healthcare center free of charge. Make sure to borrow the equipment early enough, so that you have time to practice using them before your operation. You do not need a referral to borrow assistive equipment.



**Sairaala
Nova**

The day before surgery

Take a shower in the evening. All jewellery, piercings, and nail polish must be removed before the shower. Before hand surgery, remove artificial- or gel nails. Use shampoo and soap to wash your entire body. However, avoid rubbing your skin excessively. Pay special attention to your belly button, joints, and the skin between your toes and under your nails. Use a fresh towel to dry yourself and put on a fresh set of clothes. Change fresh linens to your bed. After the shower, do not use moisturiser on the operation area. Do not shave for seven days before your operation.

You may eat and drink normally until the midnight before your operation. After midnight, do not eat or drink anything.

Take these items with you to the hospital:

- Health insurance card (Kela card), or identity card
- One day's worth of doses of your medications including: eye drops, insulin pens, asthma inhalers, Dinit-spray, hormonal products, and any on-going prescription medications
- The assistive equipment you need before or after the surgery (crutches, rollator, hearing aid, eyeglasses and their case(s), CPAP-devices)
- Mobile phone, and a charger
- If you know that you are admitted to ward, bring basic hygiene products

Take only the essentials with you. Please leave all jewellery and large amounts of money at home. The hospital is not responsible for your lost or broken personal belongings!

The day of surgery

- **Do not eat or drink anything after midnight, including mints, sweets or chewing gum!**
- **You need an empty stomach during surgery so that you do not vomit while you are under anesthesia.**

At home

In the morning, take your approved medication with a small amount of water (1 decilitre) and don't eat or drink anything else!

In the morning before your surgery, you can take a shower, or at least wash your face, arm pits and groin area. Brush your teeth as well. Do not moisturise your skin and do not wear any makeup. Please, do not use any fragrances either.

Wear a fresh set of clothes. Pay attention that your clothes should be easy to wear after your surgery so, for example, avoid tight sleeves or trouser legs if you are coming to a hand or leg operation.

Medication

Do NOT take these medications on the day of your surgery:

TAKE these medications on the day of your surgery:



Arriving at the Hospital Nova (Sairaala Nova)

The entrance (NOVA 1) for surgical patients opens at 6:30 in the morning. Please note that the time given to you in your invitation letter is the time when you need to be at the hospital, not the time of the surgery.

You will usually not be able to drive yourself home after operation. Instead, you should ask someone to pick you up or take you home in a taxi. Cars can be parked in the parking lot outside the hospital, or in the parking garage.



If you have the right to a Kela-reimbursed use of a taxi, call the regional dispatch number to book a taxi. Call to book a taxi by 14:00 the previous day.



When you arrive at the hospital, use the Nova 1 entrance. You will find a map at the end of this booklet.



Use the lift at block G to the 3rd floor. Use the self-check-in kiosks to let us know that you have arrived.



After the admission, you will go to a changing room to change into your patient gown. A nurse will explain to you how the day will proceed, check that you have correctly followed your pre-surgery instructions, that you don't have any wounds or scratches on your skin and that you have not had anything to eat or drink on the day of the surgery. If needed, you will receive pre medications that will help to ease pain after the surgery. You will also meet your surgeon if required.





Use the toilet before you are taken to the operating room. Take good care of your hand hygiene and use a disinfectant. While you are in surgery, our staff will take your clothes and belongings to the discharge unit, or to the ward where you will be staying after your surgery.

In the operating room

In the operating room, you will receive either a general anesthetic (you will be unconscious) or a local anesthetic (the surgical site will feel numb). During the surgery the staff will monitor your condition and, if necessary, give you more medication.

After your surgery

After the surgery you will be taken to a recovery room where we will monitor your progress carefully to make sure that you are feeling well, that the anesthesia wears off, the pain medication is sufficient and that you do not suffer from nausea. When your condition allows it, you will be taken to the discharge unit, or to a ward.

Coping with pain after the surgery

We use a pain scale to assess your pain so that we can help you as well as possible. We will ask you to assess your pain on a scale from zero to ten (zero being the least, ten being the most amount of pain) or using pictures that indicate your pain level.

After the surgery, you will receive instructions for pain management at home. The pain should not keep you from moving or sleeping. It is important that you follow all the instructions and take your pain medication regularly. The need for pain medication is individual. The aim is to decrease pain medication little by little and stop using it once you no longer experience pain.

Exercising and cold compresses may relieve excessive pain and decrease the need for pain medication. For non-medical pain relief, you can also try relaxing and focusing on music, a pleasant TV- show or a book.

Getting ready for discharge

From the recovery room, you will be taken to a ward or to the discharge unit. You can contact your family and friends as soon as you get your phone back after the operation.

The discharge unit

Be prepared to spend the entire day in the hospital. You can be discharged and go home as soon as you feel well enough and meet discharge criteria (usually no later than the morning after your surgery). After most surgeries patients can go home within 2–4 hours after they have been taken to the discharge unit. If you like to, a support person (such as a family member or friend) can come and join you for the patient education so that they can listen to the instructions as well.

Before you can be discharged you need to have a support person available or call a taxi driver who can take you home. If someone is coming to pick you up, let them know that in the evenings (after 20:00) they should enter Hospital Nova from the Emergency Unit entrance. The discharge unit is located on the 6th floor of block J.

Staying on a ward

After certain operations, patients start their recovery process on a ward. Sometimes even well-planned surgeries may turn out bigger than expected, in which case, you may need to stay on a ward to begin your recovery.

You can be discharged and go home when:

- You can manage at home
- You can take care of your nutrition and you don't feel nauseated
- You can get dressed
- You can get up from the bed and chairs
- You can take care of your personal hygiene and use the toilet
- You can walk and, if necessary, climb stairs
- Getting up enhances your recovery, helps you breathe better, improves circulation and boosts your digestive system
- You can manage your pain
- You can take care of the surgical wound
- You have a support person available
- You know the next steps of your treatment and you know how to get in touch with healthcare staff, if you have questions related to your recovery



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Contact information for operative wards

For inquiries about patients and their health, please call us after 12:00.

Operative wards	Telephone
J5, C5 (orthopedics, traumatology, hand surgery)	014 269 1036
D6, K6 (urology, cardiothoracic operation, vascular operation, plastic operation, ear, nose, and throat diseases)	014 269 1015
E6, L6 (gastrointestinal surgery)	014 269 1037
J6 Discharge unit, telephone hours 12–20	014 269 1563

Sick leave

Your surgeon will decide on the length of your sick leave. The need for sick leave is individual and based on the type of your operation and profession. If you need to extend your sick leave, please contact your occupational health clinic or your local healthcare center.

Feedback

You or your family can leave us feedback on your care and treatment using either a paper form (found in our units) or the online form: www.sairaalanova.fi/palaute



Confidentiality

Our staff and students are under legal obligation to keep all patient information confidential. Please do not disclose any information you may hear or see about other patients.

For more information, please visit our website:
www.sairaalanova.fi/en-US/For_patients_and_visitors

**You can find your health records at
the My Kanta service:
www.kanta.fi/en/my-kanta-pages**

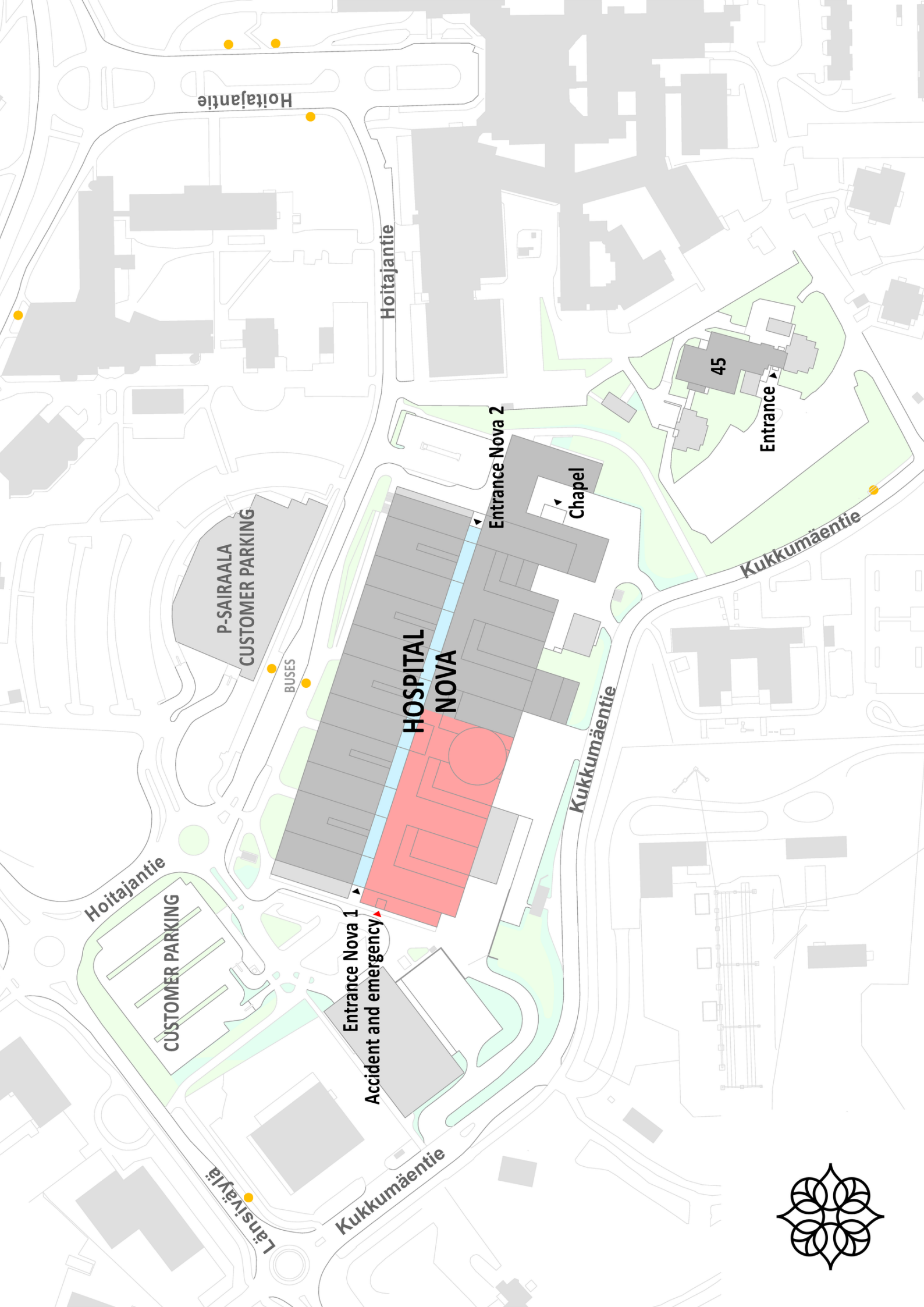
Notes



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Hoitajantie

Hoitajantie

P-SAIRAALA
CUSTOMER PARKING

BUSES

HOSPITAL
NOVA

Entrance Nova 2

Chapel

45

Entrance

Kukkumäentie

Kukkumäentie

Hoitajantie

CUSTOMER PARKING

Entrance Nova 1
Accident and emergency

Kukkumäentie

Länsiväylä



Contact information

Pre-operative inquiries,
Mon–Fri at 9:00–11:00
and 13:00–14:00

014 269 5205

Sudden cancellations on
the day of operation,
Mon–Fri at 7:00–9:00

014 269 5959

Hospital Nova Medical
Helpline

116 117

Social worker (financial
assistance)
Mon–Fri at 8:00–16:00

014 269 1555

Kela -Taxi (Central Finland
Health Care District area)

0800 414 608
(Taksi Helsinki Oy)
0800 021 83
(Menevä Oy)

Online form for contacting us:
www.hyvis.fi/web/keski-suomi/yhteydenotto-lomakkeet



www.sairaanova.fi

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