

Surgical Operations: Safely Resuming ORANGE-Level Surgery in a COVID-19 Pandemic



April 25, 2020

For: Intermountain OR Schedulers (to distribute to Office/Clinic Surgical Schedulers)

Situation: Intermountain Healthcare, alongside other system hospitals and outpatient centers, will cautiously expand surgery to the outpatient settings for certain patients meeting criteria as described below.

Background: On April 21, Governor Herbert rescinded the March 23rd order to postpone non-urgent elective medical procedures. He noted hospitals are reporting enough PPE supplies and slowing of new coronavirus cases in Utah to allow for this expansion of cases. However, Gov Herbert cautioned we should safely resume surgeries in a measured and coordinated manner. He likened this expansion to a slow increase of light from a dimmer switch versus a flip of the switch from off.

The gradual shift means moving from the COVID-red level allowing only emergent/urgent surgical and some time-sensitive procedures with rapid Covid testing to the COVID-orange level. This level expands to also include outpatient procedures for eligible low-risk patients who test negative for COVID-19. The criteria further include:

- Procedures requiring no hospital admission (no overnight stay)
- Procedures requiring no 23-hour observation
- Patient must be able to recover at home
- Patient cannot be high risk (lung disease, Age over 65, Morbid obesity (BMI>40), Diabetes, Cardiovascular disease, Uncontrolled high blood pressure, Obstructive sleep apnea, Immunosuppression, Influenza-like illness, Exposure to COVID in the last 14 days, known COVID or Person under investigation for COVID).
- Patient must test negative for COVID-19 (test to be done 3 days before surgery as coordinated by a PAT nurse – see below)
- Patient will need to self-quarantine as described below

Assessment: To aid Office/Clinic teams with the scheduling process and to assist with patient communication, this document is to be distributed to Office/Clinic Schedulers by OR Schedulers.

Recommended: The following **Scheduling Process** and **Communication Scripts** for patients be implemented immediately:

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Scheduling Process

1. In the clinic/office setting, the surgical plan will be determined by the surgeon/provider and patient.
2. As the clinic/office talks to potential surgical patients, it is important that they manage expectations. As the hospital works to coordinate care for COVID-19 patients in our community, our surgical leadership team collaborates daily to match surgical capacity with other supply needs in the hospital. This environment requires greater flexibility from both the healthcare team and from our patients. We appreciate your partnership and flexibility. Let your patients know that as soon as we can safely proceed with their procedure, you will be able to notify them of their surgical date with sufficient time to schedule preoperative testing.
3. For cases that meet eligibility, the Clinic/Office scheduler will propose the surgery/procedure with the OR Scheduler. Cases must be posted at least one week in advance to allow OR Councils review time and patient testing time.
4. The OR Scheduler will provide the case to the OR Council for review of patient eligibility and OR capacity.
5. The OR Council will determine if the case is eligible and there is enough capacity to complete the surgery. Upon approval, the OR Council will advise the OR Scheduler to schedule the procedure.
6. The OR Scheduler will coordinate dates with and inform the Office/Clinic Scheduler of the approval. The Office/Clinic Scheduler will let the patient know the case has now been scheduled and that a nurse will call to arrange the COVID-19 testing. At this point, the Office/Clinic scheduler should share the information below with the patient.
7. The pre-anesthesia testing nurse (PAT nurse) will order the COVID-19 test and call the patient and arrange for a testing time and location (3 days before surgery). The PAT nurse will further screen the patient and inform the patient that they will receive a final call with check-in time and test results the day before surgery.
8. The day before surgery, a PAT nurse will inform the patient of test results and check-in time.

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Script for Preoperative Patients: (to be shared with patients by the Clinic/Office scheduler)

How to safely prepare for your upcoming surgery

Intermountain Healthcare is working in this time of COVID-19 outbreak to provide safe surgical care to patients who continue to require procedural care. Surgical dates will be subject to healthcare demands. Please know that as soon as we can safely proceed with your procedure, we will finalize your surgical date. The following adjustments have been made to the surgical process to optimize your safety

Here's what you need to do before your surgery:

1. When possible, shelter in place for two weeks before your surgery. Stay home. Avoid out of state travel, sick individuals, and communal living spaces (skilled nursing facilities, etc).
2. To maximize your safety, a COVID-19 test will be coordinated by Intermountain Healthcare to be performed three days before your scheduled procedure
 - a. You will receive a call to coordinate the timing and location of this test and will be contacted when the results of the test return
 - b. Testing Location Information is located at: <https://intermountainhealthcare.org/covid19-coronavirus/get-testing/>
 - c. Early studies show that surgical care is much safer in patients WITHOUT COVID-19, so it is essential that immediately after you give your preoperative COVID-19 testing sample you observe strict self-isolation in the three days prior to surgery.
 - Stay home as much as possible
 - Maintain six feet of distance between yourself and people outside of your home
 - Use careful handwashing technique
 - Notify the doctor if you have sick contacts or if you develop any viral symptoms:
 1. Temperature greater than 100.4 F
 2. Cough
 3. Shortness of Breath
 4. New Body Aches
 5. Diminished sense of smell or taste

On the Day of Surgery

1. The day before surgery you will be contacted with a surgical check-in time
2. Have a single individual drop you off at the appointed time
3. You will be offered hand sanitizer and will be given a mask
4. You will find our caregivers masked to maximize your safety
5. Our check-in process is adjusted to maximize social distancing
6. We'll ask you to provide a cell phone number or other contact information for your key contact to allow the healthcare team to provide that person with updates on your care
7. Your key contact will be notified when you are safely recovered and ready for pick up

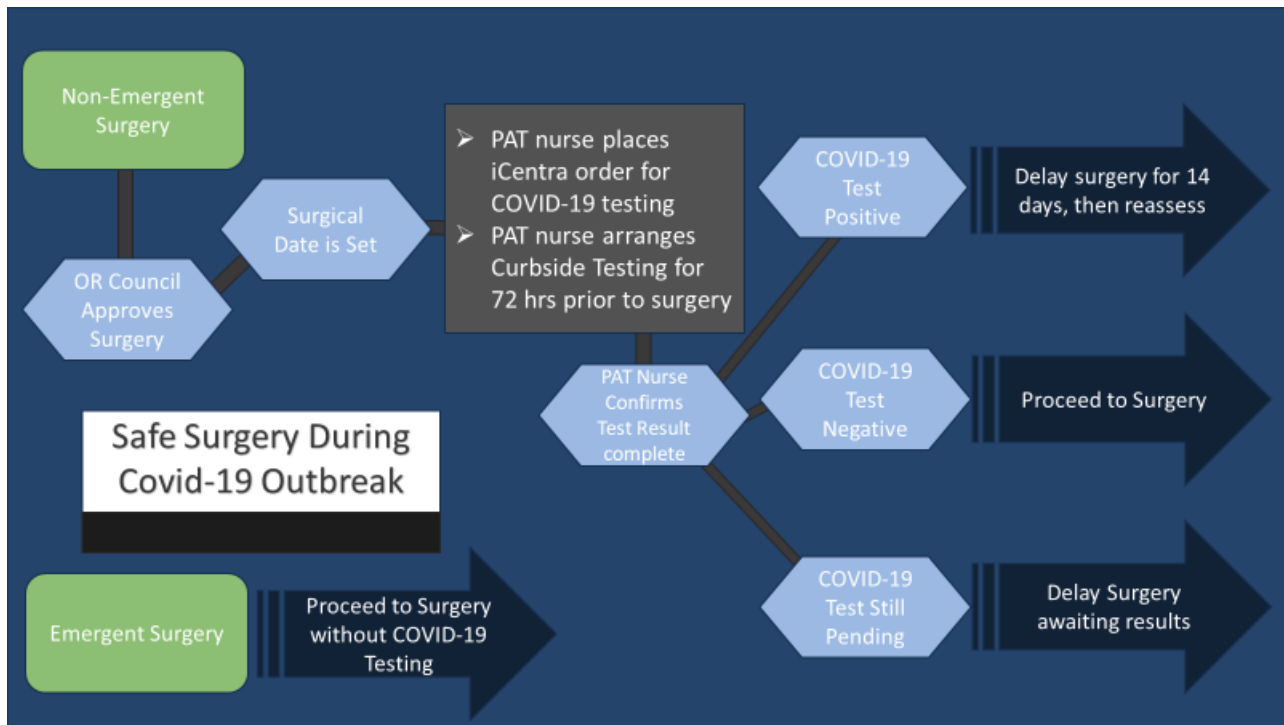
Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns during the preoperative process.

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Additional Information for Clinic/Office Schedulers and Staff



Ambulatory Clinic Surgery Scheduling Workflow Orange Condition

