

Hi, this is Dr. Athre with Athre Plastic Surgery. The focus of this video is getting ready for plastic surgery. So you'll see me have a long list of notes here, and somewhere on this video will also be a link so that you could actually read these on a hard copy.

So the process of getting ready for any type of surgical procedure, primarily for a plastic surgical procedure, starts at about two weeks prior to surgery. We normally like to do our pre-ops in the office anywhere from three, four weeks prior to surgery so that people have plenty of time to schedule their process of getting ready for surgical intervention.

So some of the things that we're going to talk about in this, getting ready for plastic surgery, are common sense. Some of them are going to open your eyes a little bit. One of the things to keep in mind as I go through this is that every surgeon has a different set of preferences with respect to plastic surgery, regular surgery, what to do, what not to do, all of these types of various things. This is what I tell my patients. So please don't use this as the end all be all for all surgical procedures out there or for other surgeons, if you're one of the patients that are watching this that are not one of my personal patients. So, first and foremost is medications.

So during your initial consultation, a list of medications was that's elicited from you so that we could actually take a look and see what medications you're taking, and most likely, you received a A-OK or not A-OK with respect to medications. So, medications like blood pressure medications and cholesterol medications are okay for surgery. Some other types of medications, like blood thinners and so on and so forth, are not okay for surgery.

If you are one of these patients that has a special condition requiring you to have thinners, aspirin, any of those types of medications, please make sure you tell me way before surgery or your surgeon way before surgery, so that they can manage those medications and figure out what needs to be done.

Moving along in the medicine category, birth control pills. There's a known interaction between birth control pills and antibiotics, rendering them less efficacious during the time period that you're taking antibiotics. We can have a long discussion about what causes this and whether this is real or not. In a nutshell, well, let's just keep it short and simple. If you are using birth control pills for contraception and you're having a surgical procedure, most likely you are going to be given antibiotics after surgery to prevent postoperative infection. During the time that you're taking antibiotics, there's a potential that your birth control pills may be less efficacious. So, use backup for that entire cycle. Blood pressure medications in general are okay to use all the way through surgery. If you're on multiple blood pressure medications things like that, please let your doctor know so that they can go through the medications and make sure that what you're taking is indeed safe for surgery. There is a large category of medications called NSAIDs. Now, NSAIDs stands for non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. This category consists of Aleve, Ibuprofen, let's see, Motrin, all of those medications. Some of the generic names are Naproxen, Celebrex. All of These medications form in the same category, and what they do is they thin your blood. These medications are not okay for surgery. So, if, hypothetically, you have a headache or something like that, take Tylenol. Now, there are special considerations to this, i.e., you have rheumatoid arthritis.

Those kinds of special consideration patients, please discuss this with your surgeon. In general, do not use any type of Ibuprofen, aspirin, naproxen, all of those kinds of medications for at least seven days before and seven days after surgery. This is extremely important. You will thin your blood out, which will make you more prone to bleeding, bruising, and swelling.

Tylenol is safe, Tylenol is safe. Now, blood thinners. Some patients require additional blood thinners. Some of the examples of this are warfarin, Lovenox, low-dose molecular heparin, those kinds of medications. If you are on these kinds of medications, please let your surgeon know. There may be modifications that need to be made. There may need to be other doctors that are involved in your surgical care to try and transition you off of these medications or how to manage these medications in your perioperative range.

Thyroid medication. If you need thyroid medication, you are hypothyroid. Okay? Thyroid medication is safe to continue throughout surgery. The reason for that is thyroid medication is important in your overall healing. So if you are hypothyroid, okay, and you are not getting enough thyroid medication or your body is not getting enough thyroid hormone, you will not heal well. So please continue your thyroid medication.

We need to talk a little bit about vitamins and supplements. A lot of people nowadays take a lot of different vitamins and supplements. Some of these include vitamin C, Zinc, St. John's Wart, Fish oil, omega Three, multivitamins. Most of these multivitamins and supplements have an antiplatelet or a blood thinning effect. In general, I tell people to stop all vitamins and supplements for approximately one week before, one week after surgery. So that's a good general rule of thumb. Some of the good vitamins that you can continue are vitamin C. That's okay. Vitamin D, Zinc, that's okay, and vitamin K.. These are some of the medications that are okay during surgery. Everything else, in general, stop it.

So, let's go to the next category in operative preparation. I want to mention smoking. Smoking of any kind. Let's talk about smoking cigarettes, vaping, cannabis, whatever you have. Let's put it in one box. It's bad, bad, bad, bad for surgery. Okay? So, if you are a smoker, let your doctor know. Let him have the opportunity in order to tell you, hey, this is how we are going to manage this. This is your potential risk of complications. All of those various things. Let him have that opportunity to discuss this with an open environment. Okay? However, do not, if you're just a casual social smoker or something to that effect, do not smoke for about two weeks before and after surgery for sure. You want to make sure your body does not have any of those chemicals within it that may impair wound healing, impair oxygenation to tissues, and create all sorts of problems, including scarring, poor wound healing, all the way up to skin necrosis and skin death.

In our last section, we said stop all vitamins. Now I'm going to talk to you about special types of preparatory vitamins. If you are a patient of mine, you will get in your preoperative pack some Arnica and Bromelain. There's a little box that we give our patients. So there are special types of vitamins that can help with wound healing, decrease bruising and swelling without thinning your blood. The main vitamins that do this are Arnica Montana, bromelain, vitamin K, vitamin C like Charlie, and Zinc. Now, if you're going to take Arnica Montana, Arnica Montana is available in several different forms, and you can use all

all of those forms. The Arnica Montana is available in gel form, which you can use topically to massage, especially in bruised areas, for example, after a facelift. It's available in tea format, like a green tea, which you can drink after surgery. It has a little bit of a green tea, herbal tea type of taste to it, so you may need to doctor it with a little honey if that's your flavor de jour. It's also available in tablet form. Normally, the Arnica Montana tablet say 30X on it. That's the strength of the tablet, and there are these little, tiny self-dissolving pills. And you can take four tablets twice daily. If you want to go to the nutrition shop or Whole Foods or something like that, or even Amazon, they do have Arnica that you can purchase online. My patients get the Arnica for them. If you are not my patient, you're watching this video, that's something that you can avail yourself of. Then there's bromelain. So bromelain is basically a chemical that's available in pineapples. It is also a good anti anti-inflammatory without thinning your blood, helps with bruising and swelling. And bromelain is also available in capsule format. So instead of you having to eat a bunch of pineapples, you can actually buy the bromelain pills. And again, that's available off Amazon and such. Now, the end-all be all on these vitamins is as such. One, there's no study that shows that they do anything bad. There are studies to show that they help. There are studies to show that they do nothing. So therefore, my overall viewpoint this is take it because you've got nothing to lose.

Hydration and Nutrition. So, starting from probably about three to four days prior, hydration is very important during surgery. So, I would say drink a lot of water, minimize energy drinks, minimize coffee, tea. Those kinds of things make you want to pee a lot, can't dehydrate you. So, make sure you're in a good fluid balance. Nutrition, it's like what your mom told you.

Nutrition is key and important. Make sure you're eating a healthy diet, plenty of protein, balanced diet with a little bit of carb, some fruits, vegetables, all these kinds of things. All these factors really do help with respect to your overall performance in terms of wound healing. Fatigue is very common after surgery. Your body is going through a lot. We're basically creating a prepared trauma to your body and hoping that your body will heal. So we want to basically put your body in the best shape that it can be in so that it gives you the best results possible. So hydration, nutrition, this is where those preparatory vitamins also help with that. So everything that you can do to help your body, this is why we do it in order to get you the best possible result.

Alcohol. Alcohol, generally, is a no-no for at least a week before and a week after surgery on multiple things. Alcohol of all kinds thins your blood out, makes you more likely to bruise and swell. Also, it dehydrates you. So for all these reasons, please abstain from all alcohol for a week before and a week afterwards. This includes beer, wine, and liquor.

Caffeine. So, caffeine, coffee, tea, energy drinks. We all have caffeine and coffee. It's one of our standard morning rituals. These types of drinks increase your blood pressure. They also tend to dehydrate you. So try to wean yourself off of these drinks for at least 2-3 days before surgery, 2-3 days after surgery. Very important. You want to keep your body as clean as possible so that it really does function at its very best.

Skincare, sun protection. So, a lot of the procedures that I do, for example, facelifts, laser resurfacing, all these kinds of various things, have a component where the skin is going to be resurfaced or is going to be addressed in certain fashions. So therefore, you want to make sure what skincare routine needs to be prior to the procedure so that there's a very clear understanding of what you're supposed to do. In general, most of the times I initiate my patients on a retinoid as well as well as a little bit of hydroquinone to prevent pigmentary issues and sun protection, sun protection, sun protection. Now, the sun protection portion is important all day, every day, these days. However, this is especially important if you're going to be doing some skin resurfacing. So, it minimizes scar formation and also helps with the skin healing and therefore minimizing any type of irregularities, whether they be textural or color based. Tanning bed just don't do it. It's bad. It's bad all day, every day.

So, a couple of general things that I think all surgical patients should keep at home. So when you're going to the grocery store preparing in that two-week, 10-day time period prior to surgery, a couple of things that I think that you should keep at home to help you in your postoperative time period. So, if you want to grab notepad, now is the time. My patients get this printed. As I said, there's a link somewhere on here. Look at the link. You can also print this out for yourself.

Number one, Gatorade and Sprite. So initially, immediately after anesthesia, you're probably not going to be wanting to eat a full meal. This is a good thing to maintain hydration. Also, keep some types of simple food, like maybe soup, pudding, applesauce. These are some good things to keep in the fridge as you're slowly getting back to your regular diet.

Frozen peas. Get a couple of bags of frozen peas from the freezer aisle and keep them in the freezer. Frozen peas tend to be one of the best types of ice packs. What you can do with the frozen peas is you can wrap them in a old terrycloth towel, and they really conform very well.

Hydrogen peroxide, good general thing to keep at home. Q-tips, some nonsterile 4 by 4 gauze, and also some artificial tears. These are some very simple things that are really going to help your overall post-operative, how you feel in terms of trying to deal with some of the things that you may come up with in that post-operative period. So this is a good type of the nuts and bolts of what you need to do to prepare.

Now, this last little section is probably the most important in some ways, and I think a lot people just skim over this, which is the emotional and psychological considerations that we all need to take into account when having surgery. So, I think most of us tend to go, Yeah, that's fine. That's a bunch of mambo-schmambo, and I'm going to be fine. Cosmetic surgery, plastic surgery, esthetic surgery is very different with a lot of different types of surgery. I think one of the things that happens, let's say you have your appendix needs to come out. It's a very systematic thing where you go in, you tell them, Hey, my appendix needs to come out. They take your appendix out. You're healed, your surgeon says, Ciao, ciao, and you walk out.

In terms of esthetic, cosmetic and cosmetic surgery, there's a lot more going on. There's stuff like, What's it going to look like? How am I going to heal? Am I going to have a problem? There's so much going on

that I think that the emotional considerations are extremely important to address, and we're going to have an open conversation about that. First, patients frequently will go through this roller coaster of emotions before and after surgery. So when you first come into your consultation to see your surgeon, there's a lot of excitement. There's a lot of, oh, my God, this is awesome. This is about to happen because there's a lot of this pent-up anxiety, and you've been wanting to do this for a while.

Fast forward a little bit, you get to the pre-op, and stuff starts becoming extremely real. We're having things like signing papers and permission slips and consents. So now there's this anxiety level that comes into place and nervousness. What's it going to look like? I hope everything goes well. All these types of feelings come into play. This is normal. I do not give my patients any type of anxiety modification medications. I don't want them to dull their senses. I really do want them to feel this and know what's going on. I am a surgeon. I'm in the operating room every day. Yet when I need a surgical procedure for myself, I get the anxiety. And I think that this is normal. It's human, and I think we need to deal with it.

Now, that anxiety builds itself up until we get to the point where we're doing surgery. Once we've done with surgery, now there's a separate roller coaster that takes over. Initially, there's this exhilaration that the surgery is done. And then swelling sets in. There's a depression that sets in, not being able to see the results right away, having to wait for the results. There's anxiety that fits in there. So, there is that roller coaster. I would say that even though everybody wants to heal as quick as possible, healing really continues for 6, 9 months. People always assume that the worst day for swelling is going to be the day of surgery, and that's not really the case. Swelling normally hits at about 2-3 days. So as you navigate this roller coaster, please, please, please keep all of these things in mind.

I think knowledge is power. Preparation is key to success, but at the same time, you need to know that this happens and allow yourself the opportunity to go through this process. If you follow my social media, I had a hair transplant. And even though this is a smaller procedure in comparison to some of the procedures that I perform on many of my patients, I went through the same process myself. There is a sense of depression afterwards going, OMG, did I really need to do that? Am I really going to get the result that I wanted? All this stuff really does happen. So please don't just brush it off. My patients get a little chart that explains all of this. And I think that this is a very valid thing that happens. And I really hope that you sit, you look at this thing, and you take stock of it, take inventory of it, and own it. And you'll probably get to the point at about the two-month point, three-month point after surgery, where you really start getting in there and going, I like the results. I'm happy with myself. So, there is a little bit of investment in time. Even though we live in this world where everybody wants everything quickly, it just doesn't happen that way.

I hope this video has been really informative, and I hope this has helped you prepare for surgery. Thank you very much for listening.