

In Saskatchewan



- Saskatchewan has developed performance goals which clearly set **target time frames** for surgery that correspond to the patient's need.
- Surgeons now use a **common list of questions** to assess patients, to ensure that people are assessed consistently and fairly across the province, and that those who need surgery most, get it first.
- Physicians and health regions can use the new **Surgical Patient Registry** to track and monitor patients. The Registry is the most comprehensive surgical database in Canada.
- You can get detailed information through www.sasksurgery.ca. This Web site gives you information about specialists, regional services, and approximate wait times. If you have further questions, you can call a **regional or surgical contact** person.

Surgical care Process

Patient with problem

Family physician

Referral to surgical specialist

Diagnostic tests completed

If surgery required
forms sent to Health Region Booking Office
and surgical registry updated: consent, patient
information, standardized patient assessment

Wait list confirmation mailed to patients
who have requested it on booking forms
(available province-wide in 2006)

Surgery date arranged based on
standardized patient assessment

Surgery date communicated to patient

Pre-operative tests completed

Surgery completed

Quick Facts

- ❖ More than 94,000 surgeries are performed in Saskatchewan every year – more than 260 each day.
- ❖ About 80% of all surgeries are completed within six months.
- ❖ 90% of all surgeries are completed within one year.

For more information, visit:
www.sasksurgery.ca



Surgery in Saskatchewan

Changes To Surgical Care



Finding out that you need surgery can create anxiety. Not knowing where to go for more information can add to the stress. This brochure will give you answers to some common questions about the surgical care process.

Saskatchewan's surgical care system has long provided residents with excellent care and has been significantly improved, so that people get the care they need, when they need it. *The Action Plan for Saskatchewan Health Care 2001*, identified improved access to surgical care as a top priority.

Supported by expert advice from the Saskatchewan Surgical Care Network (SSCN), our province is the first jurisdiction in Canada to develop a comprehensive approach to reducing surgical wait times.

More information is now available about your surgical care options. You can get a better idea of how long you may wait for surgery, find out about the options available in other health regions, or learn more about how you are assessed and assigned priority on surgical wait lists. Ultimately, you will be more informed, and will be served by a fairer system with appropriate wait times.



Preparing to have surgery

Who decides if I need surgery?

Your first visit will likely be to your family doctor. If you are referred to a surgeon, you and the surgeon will discuss your needs. If the surgeon recommends a procedure, you then decide whether to have surgery.

What can I do during the surgical care process?

Take the time to familiarize yourself with your full range of surgical options by talking to your doctor. You should have a complete understanding of the risks of surgery, and discuss with your physician whether those risks outweigh the potential benefits. Feel free to ask questions about all of your treatment options.

How long will I wait for surgery?

Waits may vary for different types of surgery, or between specialists or regions. For specific information about your case, you can contact your surgeon's office, or a surgical care coordinator or regional contact. You can also get an approximate wait time for your surgery by doing the following:

- ❖ Visit www.sasksurgery.ca.
- ❖ Know the names of the surgical specialty (i.e. orthopaedics) and your particular procedure.
- ❖ Using the above information, go to the wait times/wait list data for your health region. While it does not give individual patient wait times, it can give you an idea of how long you are likely to wait for a specific procedure.
- ❖ If you have any questions, call your surgeon, or your region's surgical contact person, as listed in this brochure.

Questions to ask your family doctor

- ❖ Why have you referred me to this particular specialist?
- ❖ How much experience does he/she have in treating my type of condition?
- ❖ If I need surgery, about how long will I have to wait?
- ❖ If the specialist has a long wait list, is there another one in the province who can provide the same treatment sooner?



Questions to ask your specialist

- ❖ How necessary and how urgent is the surgery?
- ❖ What are the risks of having surgery?
- ❖ Are medicinal treatments available for my condition other than surgery?
- ❖ How long have other patients waited for this type of surgery?
- ❖ Is there evidence my condition will worsen while I wait?
- ❖ What should I do if my condition changes while I am waiting for surgery?
- ❖ How can I arrange to be contacted on short notice if a cancellation occurs?
- ❖ What should I do if I change my mind about having the surgery, if I need to re-schedule, or if my condition improves and I no longer need surgery?

What happens when I see a specialist?

Step 1 Your surgeon will order any diagnostic tests and **assess your need** for surgery, using a standard questionnaire that helps measure your urgency for surgery.

Step 2 Ask your surgeon questions about the procedure. If you agree to have surgery, you will be asked to sign a **consent form** that will be forwarded to the hospital. Patients are able to call Surgical Care Coordinators/Regional Contacts to confirm that they've been placed on a wait list for surgery.

Step 3 One to six weeks before your surgery, your health region or surgeon's office will call you with a **tentative date** for surgery, and explain hospital procedures. You may be asked to provide additional **pre-surgery information**.

Step 4 Any tests required prior to surgery will be done.

Step 5 The length of your stay in hospital will be determined by your procedure. For **day surgery**, you will have surgery, and be discharged on the same day after a short recovery period. For a **same day admit procedure**, you will stay in hospital for one or more nights. For an **inpatient procedure**, you will be admitted to hospital prior to the day of your surgery, and stay one or more nights.

Step 6 Following your procedure, you will be told about your **post-surgery care**, including any required medications, therapies, treatments and follow-up appointments.

*Remember, if you wish to have surgery outside of Canada, prior approval by Saskatchewan Health is **mandatory** in order for any medical costs to be considered for coverage. An appropriate Saskatchewan specialist must submit a written request for approval. To be considered for coverage, the proposed treatment must be a medical necessity and not available in Canada. Please check with your physician about coverage if you are considering going to another province for surgery.*

Who can I call for more Information?

Surgical Care Coordinators can be an important link with your specialist and health region. They can:

- ❖ Confirm that you are on a wait list for surgery;
- ❖ Give you an estimated wait time;
- ❖ Find out whether you have a date scheduled for admission to hospital; and
- ❖ Provide you with general information about hospital booking procedures.

Saskatoon Health Region

Surgical Care Coordinator.....1-866-543-6767

Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region

Surgical Care Coordinator.....1-866-622-0222

Other regional contact numbers:

Cypress	Swift Current	(306) 778-9530
Five Hills	Moose Jaw	(306) 691-2621
Heartland	Kindersley, Rosetown	(306) 463-4477 ext. 227
Keewatin Yatthé	La Loche, Ile-a-la-Crosse	(306) 833-5507
Kelsey Trail	Melfort, Nipawin, Tisdale	1-877-573-6601
Mamawetan Churchill River	La Ronge	(306) 425-4823
Prairie North	North Battleford, Lloydminster, Meadow Lake	(306) 820-6040
Prince Albert Parkland	Prince Albert	(306) 765-6022
Sun Country	Estevan, Weyburn	(306) 637-3642
Sunrise	Yorkton, Melville	(306) 786-0735 1-800-505-9220