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Preparing for Surgery

Before surgery

1. **Arrival time:** You'll be given a surgery date and time 24-48 hrs before surgery.
2. Usually, you need to arrive at the hospital about **2 hours before** the scheduled surgery. The actual surgery may happen earlier or later, so keep the whole day open.
3. **Eating and drinking:**
 - If you're having **general anesthesia or "twilight" sedation: Do not eat or drink after midnight** unless your medical team gives you different instructions.
 - If it's **local anesthesia without sedation:** there are no food restrictions according to this sheet.
 - Medications can generally be taken with a **small sip of water** on the morning of surgery.
 - Unless you're having local anesthesia, you'll need someone to **drive you home**; a taxi is not permitted.
4. **Medications/blood thinners:**
 - Continue your regular medications unless your doctor tells you otherwise.
 - If you take **Plavix, Coumadin, full-dose aspirin (325 mg), or Pradaxa**, you **must get authorization from your cardiologist or internist before stopping them**.
 - The sheet says it is generally safe to continue **baby aspirin (81 mg)**.
5. **Pre-op testing:** Some patients need a pre-operative evaluation, which may include blood/lab tests and/or clearance from an internist or cardiologist. If requested, schedule this as soon as your surgery date is given.
6. **Hospital phone interview:**
 - **Inova Alexandria Hospital: 703-504-3530**
 - **Oakville Ambulatory Surgery Center: 571-670-9001**
 - **McLean Ambulatory Surgery Center: 703-663-1440**
7. **Questions or cancellation:** Call the surgeon's office at **703-823-4066** as soon as possible.

Important: If this is for an upcoming surgery, follow the **most recent instructions from your surgeon/anesthesia team** if they differ from this older handout—especially regarding fasting and medications.