**PRE-OPERATIVE SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS – for General Anesthesia**

***Two Weeks before Surgery***

* Anti-inflammatory drugs like Aspirin®, Motrin®, Ibuprophen, Advil®, etc. should not be taken for two weeks prior to surgery due to their effects on the body’s blood clotting system and the risk of increased blood loss during the operation and hematomas post-operatively. If you require painkillers on a regular basis for arthritic pain or headaches, the use of Tylenol ES®, will not affect blood clotting and is permitted. The use of herbal supplements or traditional medicines should be discussed with Dr. Cowan pre-operatively to see if they will affect your surgery. Failure to heed these instructions may require cancellation of your surgery due to risks.
* Avoid using garlic in meals or taking garlic tablets for at least 2 weeks prior to surgery. Avoid gingko balboa for the same period of time.
* Always notify Dr. Cowan’s office of any changes in your health.
* Full payment for your surgery must be received by this time to avoid cancellation.

***One Week before Surgery***

* Patients should not consume alcoholic beverages for 3 days prior to surgery. The use of alcohol has a thinning effect on the blood system and will result in increased bleeding and potential complications during surgery.

***The last Days Before Surgery***

* Remember NOT to have anything to eat or drink after midnight the night before your surgery. You may brush your teeth, making sure not to swallow any water. However, you are permitted to take sips of water until 2 hours before surgery. Failure to observe these instructions may result in the cancellation of the surgery with associated costs.
* Bathe or shower the morning of surgery but do not apply any makeup. Wear comfortable shoes and loose comfortable clothing such as t-shirts, button-down shirts, sweat pants or baggy shorts that will fit over bandages or dressings following surgery. Do not wear contact lenses or jewelry.

***What medications should I stop taking prior to surgery?***

* You should **continue to take ALL** of your normal medications ***except blood thinners (i.e. ASA, yes even the 81 mg dose)*** up until and including the day of surgery.
* Stopping blood thinners before surgery needs to be done safely. If you are on a blood thinner, Dr. Cowan will need to confer with your family doctor and give you a recommendation when they can be safely stopped and when you should resume taking them after surgery. Dr. Cowan will take advise from your family doctor or heart specialist who may not approve of this request and in such cases surgery is not able to occur.
* Failure to terminate a blood thinner such as aspirin, when requested, may result in cancellation of your surgery.

***Where is my surgery?***

* All general anesthetic procedures are performed at the Cambie Surgery Centre. The Cambie Surgery Centre is located at 2836 Ash Street, Vancouver. Ph: (604) 555-1338.
* Please contact the Cambie Centre to see what time they have you scheduled for surgery and what time you should arrive so there is adequate time to meet your anesthesiologist before your procedure.

***How long will surgery take?***

* The length of surgery depends on the procedure being performed. Dr. Cowan will give you some idea during your consultation.
* Leave the name of your contact person / escort with the admitting nurse at Cambie Surgery when you arrive. Dr. Cowan will often call this person at the end of the surgery to provide an update of your status.

***When will I be discharged from the surgery centre?***

* After your surgery you will be allowed to recover under nursing supervision in the Cambie Centre recovery room. Your recovery room nurse will allow you to leave only when you are medically stable, drinking by mouth without nausea, able to maintain pain control with oral medications, and have your contact person / escort present. Escorts may call the Cambie Surgery Centre number to speak to the recovery nurse to get some idea of when they feel you will be able to leave. Ph: (604) 555-1338.
* In some cases, and will larger procedures, Dr. Cowan will insist that you stay overnight at the Cambie Centre for nursing observation. Often you will be discharged around 9 AM the following morning depending on your progress. This service is available at an extra charge but must be arranged at the time you book your surgery.

***Post-Operative Instructions and Medications***

* Dr. Cowan will give you a copy of post-operative care instructions. A copy is left with the Cambie Centre recovery room nurses to review with you and your escort before you leave.
* If you want a copy of the post-operative instructions prior to your surgery please ask the staff at Dr. Cowan’s office.
* Medications should be filled out prior to your surgery so they are available once you are discharged from hospital. If you have not received your post-operative medication prescriptions, please contact Dr. Cowan’s staff to obtain them prior to your surgery date.