

Surgery 101: A guide for Medical Students

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Pre-op

- Introduce yourself to your patient, and inform the patient that you will be joining the operative team.
- Provide your gloves and gown to the OR scrub tech while introducing yourself to the surgical team.
- Based on the patient's chart, can you answer the following questions:
 - How was the diagnosis made, and what treatment is being offered?
 - Do you know which surgery will be performed, and the relevant anatomy?
 - Are there any pertinent positives or negatives in the H&P?

Higher Level Input:

- Operative manuals (i.e., Zollinger's Operative Manual, Bentley's Operative Techniques in Plastic Surgery, etc.) will provide the pertinent steps and anatomy that you may get asked during the case.

Intra-Op

- Assist in transferring and positioning the patient on the operating room table (with permission from the OR staff).
- Know the anatomy of the organ system you are operating.
- Plan to stay for the whole surgery.
 - Remember that you may not receive a lunch or dinner break till after the operation.
- Be engaged and focused. As you progress in your medical school years and residency, you will learn how to assist in the OR more efficiently.

Post-op

- Join the surgeon when she updates the family. This is a good way of learning people skills.
- Assist in transferring the patient to the PACU.
- Perform a post op check prior to going home or leaving at the end of the day.
 - Are there any important updates that you need to share with your resident or faculty?
- If the patient is admitted, remember to round on the patient when you return in the morning.

- The night resident might have critical sign out from overnight, so speaking to them before their shift ends will be helpful!
- Have dressing supplies handy on rounds.
- Be prepared to present your patient's case to your Attending or Resident.