

# Recovering from surgery when you live alone takes planning



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Gone are the days when you'd spend a week in the hospital recovering with the help of nurses. Nowadays, only very severe surgeries get time in the hospital, and you have to take care of the rest at home yourself.

Recovering from surgery is no fun for anyone, but it's even tougher when you live alone. You may not have anyone who can help you do things that you aren't supposed to do after surgery. Sometimes, these questions aren't easily answered. But with some planning, you can have a restful recovery.

If you have a dog, you may wonder what in the world you'll do with him. Make sure he's taken care of while you're in the hospital by asking a friend for help or hiring a [pet sitter](#) can come over and take him outside or for regular walks, as well as make sure he's fed. Once you're home, your doctor may want you to [go for walks](#) to keep your circulation moving. But if your dog pulls on his leash, this could affect your surgery recovery. A pet sitter can come by and

take him for his walks for you. You'll rest more easily knowing he's got a friend to play with him. Some may suggest boarding him during this time, but you will rest better if you have your trusted companion by your side. Dogs seem to know when you aren't feeling well.

When you don't have family and friends nearby to help, you you'll have to prepare for your home recovery in advance. Make sure you have all your housekeeping duties done before your surgery: change the sheets, do your laundry, get rid of clutter, wash the dishes, clean everything that will bother you after your surgery. You won't feel like doing any of this after your procedure.

Stock your pantry and refrigerator with foods that you can heat up in the microwave pretty easily, such as canned soup, frozen dinners and the like. Place plates, cups and anything you use regularly between waist and shoulder height. Make sure you have plenty of toilet paper and any other household supplies.

Ask your doctor if he or she can prescribe your medications in advance so you can have those at home instead of having to pick them up on the way home. [Ask your doctor](#) what else you might need, such as over-the-counter medicines, crutches, raised toilet seats or bandages so you can prepare.

Choose a comfy spot to relax. If your bedroom is far or upstairs from the bathroom and kitchen, consider doing most of your recovery from the living room. Check into renting a hospital bed if necessary, or have someone help you move your bed to the living room before your surgery.

Having everything nearby will ease the physical exertion required. Set out some clean, loose pajamas to wear around the house -- ones that won't irritate any surgery scars. Make sure your phone and cell phone charger are within easy reach.

Remember, you'll need something to [keep you entertained](#), such as TV, movies and books. You may not be able to concentrate on books at first, so have your TV remotes near your bed or couch, wherever you plan to recover. Your convalescence is a great time to catch up on all the [TV shows](#) you haven't had time to watch.

Ask your doctor about [driving](#). Most surgeries require you to [abstain from driving](#) for at least 24 hours, and some for much longer. Get a friend to help you get to and from the hospital or hire a cab or rideshare service. You'll likely need a ride to your follow-up appointments, too. So plan for that in advance.

Your surgery recovery should be a time of restful healing. If you plan for it well, you'll be back on your feet in no time.