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## Eat less, eat slowly, get used to fasting

Although the practice of prolonged fasting is less and less common in surgery, it is very likely that for at least a few days you will be asked to eat little or not at all. If you have the habit of eating a lot, you will find yourself having something similar to a withdrawal crisis. If you chew a little and eat quickly, you will feel nauseous or throw up.

Start 2-3 weeks before surgery: have a light dinner for the first few days, then skip it completely once or twice a week (remember to drink and introduce liquids; consult your Diabetologist if you suffer from diabetes).

Get used to stopping at lunch before you burst: don't bloat your stomach, eat slowly and chew for a long time. Rather than a big lunch, eat small and frequent meals (snacks). Drink water between meals.

## When you can, sleep

Have a regular sleep schedule.

If you can, do not lose precious hours of sleep in the days preceding the surgery. Go to bed and read a book rather than watching late television.

Dinner early (in most hospitals you will eat between 6 and 7 pm) and go to sleep no later than 10 pm.

If you can, after lunch walk for half an hour and then lie down to rest for about forty minutes.

During hospitalization, it is very common to have sleep disturbances and to reverse the sleep-wake rhythm, sleeping during the day and struggling to sleep at night. When you are in the hospital, stay busy during the day, respecting the rhythms of rest.

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## Dr. Marco Lotti - [lottimarco.eu](http://lottimarco.eu)

### Who I am

I am a Surgeon with more than 25 years of experience in General Surgery, Laparoscopic and Minimally Invasive Surgery, Advanced Surgical Oncology and Emergency and Trauma Surgery. I worked as a tutor for Residents in General Surgery and in Master Courses in Laparoscopic Surgery. I am the author of several didactic works, innovative techniques of Laparoscopic Surgery and reviewer for several scientific journals.

### Why this brochure?



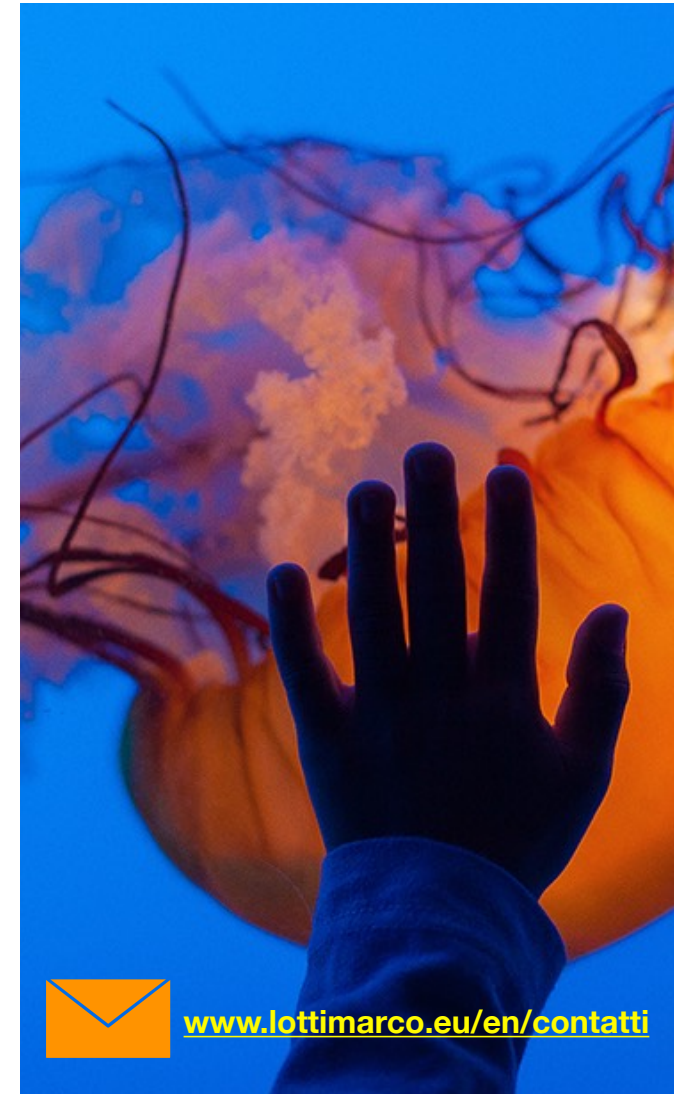
These are the tips I usually give to people who rely on me for surgery. They represent my personal vision, they are not general guidelines. This brochure is freely downloadable and distributable under a Creative Commons license: if you use it, even if only partially, remember to mention the source and the Author.



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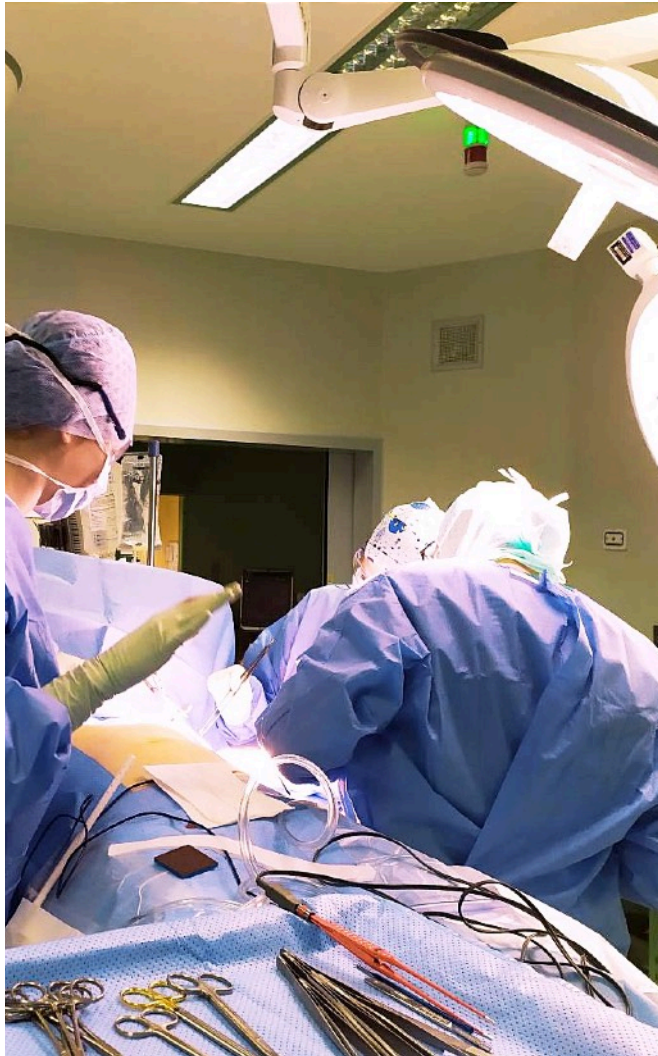
# Prepare for Surgery

To face surgery in the best possible way, you need to prepare. Here's how to do it.



[www.lottimarco.eu/en/contatti](http://www.lottimarco.eu/en/contatti)

Do not suffer your Surgery, rather face it. Just as you prepare for every important appointment in your life, you should also do it for surgery.



**Did I really understand what my surgery will be?**

Where will the wound be?  
How long will it last?  
What anesthesia?  
Will I have nausea/pain?  
How long will I stay in bed?  
How long in the hospital?

**What will change in my habits?**

How will I eat?  
How will I breathe?  
How will I move?  
How will I sleep?  
Who will I relate to?  
Will I be able to wash myself?

**What can I take with me?**

Having with you something familiar (a book, a photograph, your neck pillow, a good lucky charm, a garment) helps you to overcome difficulties.

**Who will keep me company and help me?**

Ask who will be able to visit you at the hospital and when.  
Who will answer you in case of need (Nurse, Doctor, Healthcare Worker)?



**Practice breathing - you'll relax and have less nausea and pain**

Lie down and place a weight (such as a book) on the intended site of your surgical wound. Focus on the discomfort it gives you. Then begin to inhale slowly but deeply, first lifting the abdomen (using the diaphragm) and then expanding the chest (using the intercostal muscles), finally letting the air escape slowly. Do everything calmly, for 2-3 minutes (don't overdo it or you will get dizzy).

Now try to fix a ping pong ball with a plaster on the wound site: get used to walking and sitting with it (don't sit on the ball...).



**Prepare your back for Surgery**

Staying in bed will put a strain on your back, especially if you already have a sedentary lifestyle or work in a sitting position. You will likely have the muscles in your back, neck, and loins in a tense position, which could give you headache, nausea, pain, or the uncomfortable feeling that you cannot find a comfortable position in bed.

Before surgery, get used to walking every day for at least half an hour, breathing deeply and calmly. Do gentle back bending and rotation exercises to lighten your muscles.