

# **G: Surgical Nursing**

Major Competency Area: **G**  
**Surgical Nursing**

Priority: **One**

Competency: **G-1**  
**Knowledge of Surgical Procedures**

Date: September 1, 2005

A Licensed Practical Nurse will:

- G-1-1      Demonstrate knowledge of a variety of surgical procedures such as:**
- cardiovascular surgeries and procedures
  - gastrointestinal surgeries and procedures
  - genitourinary surgeries and procedures
  - gynecological surgeries and procedures
  - dermatological surgeries and procedures
  - neurological surgeries and procedures
  - thoracic surgeries and procedures
  - orthopedic surgeries and procedures
  - plastic surgeries and procedures.
- G-1-2      Demonstrate knowledge and ability to provide care for client before and after surgical procedure as per agency policy.**

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Competency: G-2  
**Perioperative Teaching**

Date: September 1, 2005

A Licensed Practical Nurse will:

**G-2-1 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to perform pre-operative teaching as necessary such as:**

- continuation of usual medications
- demonstrate effective deep breathing and coughing
- demonstrate use of incentive spirometer
- demonstrate exercises appropriate to type of surgery
- discuss common pain control options
- discuss location of personal directive / personal will
- discuss post-operative care and rehabilitation
- external drains and tubes expected following surgery
- refer to other health team members as necessary
- respond to client questions, e.g., probable length of surgery
- supply available literature / information pertinent to type of procedure / surgery.

**G-2-2 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to perform and reinforce post-operative teaching as necessary such as:**

- safety
- pain control
- observation of surgical site and dressing
- explanation of external drains
- dietary needs and restrictions
- ambulatory aids
- review literature pertaining to surgery
- encourage attendance at discharge class by client and family, if available
- educate about discharge medications and follow-up appointments
- discuss appropriate activities, dress, limitations
- contact home care, if applicable.

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Competency: G-3

**Pre-operative Care**

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A Licensed Practical Nurse will:

**G-3-1 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to perform pre-operative care as per agency policy such as:**

- pre-operative database assessment such as:
  - type of surgery
  - special tests and procedures as required
  - height and weight
  - ensure client / witness consent
  - pre-existing medical conditions and allergies
  - specimen collection
  - vital signs
- bowel preparation
- confirm oral intake restrictions
- family contact information
- secure valuables and personal property
- skin preparation as necessary.

**G-3-2 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to prepare and transfer client to the operating room (OR) as per agency policy.**

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Competency: G-4  
**Post-operative Care**

Date: September 1, 2005

A Licensed Practical Nurse will:

**G-4-1 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to receive a post-operative client from the recovery room.**

**G-4-2 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to perform post-operative care such as:**

- initial post-operative assessment-systems or head to toe:
  - circulation, sensation, movement (CSM)
    - other neurovascular checks
  - drainage devices and connections
  - dressing / wounds
  - infusion therapy
  - oxygen saturation
  - pain and discomfort
  - positioning and precautions
  - possible post-operative psychosis
  - vital signs
- review physician / surgeon orders
- safety precautions / mobilization / transfer methods
- pain management as per protocol:
  - administer analgesics (see Competency Band U)
  - pain assessment
  - comfort measures
- meet nutritional needs as per protocol
- aid elimination as per protocol
- provide emotional and psychological support to client and family.

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Competency: G-5  
**Wounds, Tubings and Drains**

Date: September 1, 2005

A Licensed Practical Nurse will:

- G-5-1 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to perform wound care related to surgical sites using medical asepsis or sterile technique as appropriate.**
- G-5-2 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to manage and maintain drainage devices such as:**
- Penrose
  - T-tube
  - Hemovac
  - continuous bladder irrigation.
- G-5-3 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to remove or shorten drainage devices such as:**
- Hemovac drainage system
  - Multi-tube system
  - Penrose drain.
- G-5-4 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to insert, care for, and remove urinary catheters. ( See Competency Band E)**
- G-5-5 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to insert, care for, and remove nasogastric tube. (See Competency Band E)**
- G-5-6 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to perform wound irrigation, packing of wounds, and removal of packing as per agency policy.**
- G-5-7 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to apply sterile dressings to surgical incisions and wounds.**

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Competency: G-6

**Removal of Staples and Sutures**

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A Licensed Practical Nurse will:

**G-6-1 Demonstrate knowledge and ability to remove staples and sutures as per protocols:**

- assess the site i.e., gaping, drainage, inflammation, signs of infection, presence of a healing line, etc.
- prepare the suture area
- swab wound as necessary
- apply steristrips as needed, or ordered
- apply appropriate dressing if needed
- count number of staples / sutures
- note client's tolerance to procedure
- document and report procedure and findings.