

October More Voices: Surgery

Category: Surgery

written by Paul Gross | October 1, 2022

Dear *Pulse* readers,

I'm very disappointed.

I was scheduled to have a surgical procedure this past Tuesday. Knowing that October's *More Voices* theme would be Surgery, I was planning, in this letter, to recount lurid details of the operation and of my postoperative pain or delirium, depending upon how many narcotic pills I was ingesting.

Alas, my procedure was postponed for a week.

So at this point I can only imagine what's to come and describe the various worries that have been flitting through my mind. I'm picturing myself lying on the operating-room table, staring up at an antiseptic ceiling, trying to maintain a sense of humor and manly calm while someone puts an intravenous line in my arm (*ouch!*)—hoping against hope that my very capable surgeon doesn't turn to his most junior assistant at a critical juncture and say, "Here, let's see what you can do!"

As I lie there, I'll have my fingers crossed that my surgeon has had a good night's sleep and is in a pleasant frame of mind. That his teenager (if he has one) didn't come home inebriated at 2:00 am and put him in a foul mood. That the anesthesiologist's hands are steady as they slide the breathing tube past my vocal cords—I need those to talk, and to sing!—down toward my lungs.

As I think about my upcoming days as a patient, I'm hoping, above all, that everyone will be kind.

My wife recently underwent surgery that involved a brief hospital stay. That stay was remarkable for the kindness shown by everyone involved in her care—from the parking-lot attendant to the security guard at the door, from the clerk who checked her in to the aide who checked her temperature, from the attendant who brought her breakfast to the nurse who brought her medications.

The staff was equally kind and patient with her roommate, whose fervid cries for help ("*I need a nurse!*") and complaints ("*I can't eat this!*") were enough to try anyone's nerves.

That kindness made such a difference.

I'm having my procedure at a different hospital, one that enjoys a fine reputation. I can only hope that I'll be treated with equal kindness. I can't wait to see how it goes.

How about you? What's your experience of [Surgery](#), this month's *More Voices* theme? Use the [More Voices Submission Form](#) to send us your lived experience.

For more details, visit [More Voices FAQs](#). And have a look at last month's theme, [Watching the Clock](#).

Remember, your health-related story should be 40-400 words. And no poetry, please.

We look forward to hearing from you!

With warm regards,

Paul Gross
Editor