

## **Essential Items to Bring to the Hospital for HIPEC/CRS Surgery**

If you are preparing for CRS (Cytoreductive Surgery) and HIPEC (Hyperthermic Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy) there are certain items that can make your stay more comfortable. This surgery is physically intensive and the recovery process can be lengthy. Below is a list of items that I have compiled based on my own experience and feedback from other patients.

### **1. Aromatherapy Diffuser and Calming Scents**

This was a lifesaver for me. An aromatherapy diffuser paired with calming scents, such as peppermint or lavender, creates a soothing atmosphere in the hospital room. It also helps with post-surgery nausea.

### **2. Small Speaker for Relaxing Music**

A small speaker with a relaxing playlist creates a more relaxing environment.

### **3. Heating Pad**

A heating pad helps soothe sore muscles and aches from surgery. It also provides warmth as the hospital room can get very cold. Be sure to check with the hospital before bringing a heating pad, as some hospitals may provide one upon request, or they may have guidelines around using personal heating devices. A heating pad with adjustable settings and easy-to-use controls is best.

### **4. Extra-Long Phone Charger**

Hospital outlets are often located in hard-to-reach spots. An extra-long phone charger (10 feet or more) allows you to use your phone while it is charging. A portable power bank is another useful option.

### **5. Comfortable Pillow**

Hospital pillows can be thin and uncomfortable. Many patients also find U-shaped travel pillows helpful for supporting their neck, especially if they're in a reclined or seated position for long periods of time.

### **6. Loose, Comfortable Clothing for Discharge**

When it's time to leave the hospital, have loose, soft clothing available for discharge. Look for items made from comfortable, stretchy fabrics that won't press on any tender or swollen areas. Clothing like baggy pants, oversized shirts, or zip-up sweaters work well, as they're easy to put on and won't restrict movement.

### **7. Headphones or AirPods**

Noise-canceling headphones or earbuds allow you to create your own peaceful space. Wireless earbuds or AirPods are convenient since they allow you to move without worrying about tangled cords.

## 8. Robe

Hospital gowns can be uncomfortable, so you may want to take a robe of your own. Look for one with pockets if possible, as they are handy for carrying small items like your phone or lip balm.

## 9. Slippers with Tread

Walking is an important part of the recovery process, and slippers with good tread will help with stability. Make sure the slippers are easy to put on and have a secure fit, especially when mobility may be limited. The hospital may provide basic slippers, but they are usually thin and uncomfortable.

## 10. Books and Activity Books

You may or may not feel like reading or working on activity books, but here are some suggestions:

- **Uplifting Books:** Consider reading inspirational or motivational books that can help keep your spirits up. Memoirs of cancer survivors, feel-good novels, or books on spirituality can be helpful.
- **Light Fiction or Mysteries:** Fictional stories can be a great escape. Light-hearted novels or mysteries can help pass the time without requiring too much mental energy.
- **Audiobooks:** Sometimes, reading can be tiring post-surgery, so audiobooks are a great alternative.
- **Activity Books:** Crossword puzzles, word search books, Sudoku, and coloring books are wonderful options for keeping your mind engaged without requiring too much focus. These activities are great for distracting from discomfort and offering a mental break from the hospital setting.
- **Journals or Guided Journals:** Writing down your thoughts can be therapeutic. A journal or guided journal can give you a way to process emotions, capture memories, or simply document your progress.

## Additional Essentials to Bring

These items may not be essential, but they can add to your comfort and help you manage the smaller inconveniences of a hospital stay:

- **Lip Balm and Moisturizer:** Hospital air can be drying, so keep your skin hydrated with a light moisturizer and lip balm.
- **Notebook and Pen:** A small notebook is handy for jotting down questions for doctors, tracking your medications, or simply journaling your thoughts.

- **Hand Sanitizer and Wipes:** Although hospitals are clean, having your own sanitizer can bring peace of mind.
- **Eye Mask and Earplugs:** Hospitals have 24-hour lighting and frequent noise, so an eye mask and earplugs can help you get better rest.
- **Water Bottle:** Staying hydrated is important, and a refillable water bottle can make it easier to sip on water throughout the day.

### **Final Thoughts**

Preparing for CRS/HIPEC surgery involves both physical and mental preparation, and having comforting items available can make a significant difference. Packing items that support relaxation, comfort, and entertainment can help create a positive and healing environment, allowing you to focus on your recovery.