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| **The Right Time to Plan Elective Surgeries****If you’re considering elective surgery, should you wait until you retire so that you can recover without time pressure? It makes sense to figure out when surgery will cause the least financial pain.**There is no one-size-fits-all advice for timing elective surgery as retirement approaches. Factors such as age, income, savings, recovery period, paid sick days, and insurance coverage interact in a unique way for each individual.**Consider your health insurance status.** If you are under 65 years old, you may be covered by employer health insurance, your own private plan, or no plan at all. The first step is to compare the coverage you’ll receive now versus what Medicare will cover after you reach 65. Some elective surgeries considered medically necessary, such as cataract removal and knee replacements, are covered by Medicare, but other elective surgeries might not be.**Balance recovery period versus sick days.** An important consideration is the length of time it will take to recover from elective surgery. You may have enough sick days or paid leave to cover a short recovery period. However, a long recovery period may be accompanied by limited or no income. That puts you under pressure to return to work as soon as possible. The pressure is removed if you wait until retirement.**Complications can occur.** Prudence dictates that you consider the effect of possible complications on your recovery period. Infections, unanticipated reactions, even surgical mistakes can prolong recovery periods significantly. You also must weigh the chances that the surgery will result in permanent disabilities. None of this is good, but it’s much easier to handle if you wait until retirement. If you’re still working and need several months or a year to recover, will your job still be there when you are able to return?**Waiting until 65 gives you time to consider your Medicare options.** Knowing in advance what surgery you need helps you assess your Medicare options. Original Medicare covers some hospital and outpatient costs. You can increase the amount and scope of coverage in two ways. Medicare Advantage is a private Medicare replacement, while Medigap provides supplemental Medicare coverage.1 Weigh your Medicare options against your current insurance coverage to help decide whether to wait.**Integrate your surgery into your financial plans.** When it comes to surgery, hope for the best but prepare for the worst. Your financial plans should account for both the expected and unanticipated costs of surgery. Please contact me to discuss the impact of elective surgery on your financial health. Together, we can develop a plan that helps to minimize the impact of surgery on your finances.

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