A NEW BEGINNING STARTS HERE

PREPARING FOR YOUR SURGERY

THE CENTER FOR GENDER CONFIRMATION SURGERY

WEISS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
THE CENTER FOR GENDER CONFIRMATION SURGERY

Thank you for choosing The Center for Gender Confirmation Surgery at Weiss Memorial Hospital. We are honored to be your destination for your surgical needs. Our experienced, dedicated and caring team of providers will go above and beyond to care for you through your surgical and recovery time at Weiss.

We are proud to be led by our Medical Director Dr. Loren Schechter, who is a world-renowned plastic surgeon, specializing in gender confirmation surgery. As a member of the board of The World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH.org) and a co-author of The Standards of Care (WPATH, v 7), he has helped to advance the surgical care for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals.

This information will help you prepare for surgery and your stay in Chicago.

The booklet includes:
- Pre-surgical requirements
- Pre-surgical checklist
- Information for bowel prep (for individuals undergoing vaginoplasty, phalloplasty, or metoidioplasty)
- Contact list for Weiss providers
- List of hotels and skilled nursing facilities in the area
- Restaurants and traveling tips in the area
- Local pharmacies

If I can be of assistance to you in any way, please feel free to contact me at (773) 564-7238.

Regards,

Nancy Ritz, Executive Assistant
Center for Gender Confirmation Surgery
weisshospital.com
nritz@vhschicago.com
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Pre-Surgical Requirements ............................................................................................................................ 4
- Pre-Surgical Checklist .......................................................................................................................................5
- Bowel Prep Instructions .................................................................................................................................. 6
- Key Contacts & Addresses .............................................................................................................................. 7
- Travel to Chicago ................................................................................................................................................ 8
- Local Transportation Options ........................................................................................................................ 9
- Parking Information .........................................................................................................................................11
- Local Hotel Information ..................................................................................................................................12
- Post-Discharge Options for Skilled Nursing Care ............................................................................................16
- Local Food & Meal Delivery Services ............................................................................................................18
- Local Pharmacies ..............................................................................................................................................19
- Local Websites & Resources ..........................................................................................................................21
- Traveler Safety Tips ......................................................................................................................................... 22
PRE-SURGICAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Hormones (estrogen, progesterone, or testosterone) should be discontinued two weeks prior to surgery. If you are taking spironolactone, this may be continued. Specific information regarding when to resume hormones will be reviewed by Dr. Schechter and team during your stay in the hospital.

2. Primary care provider to provide pre-operative medical evaluation (no later than 2 weeks prior to surgery date) to include:
   • CBC – (dated within 30 days of surgery)
   • BMP – if ordered (dated within 30 days of surgery)
   • Urinalysis and urine culture if ordered by Dr. Schechter
   • History and Physical examination by primary care provider (dated within 30 days of surgery)

Please email to Christina Hopson, Gender Coordinator at chopson@weisshospital.com or fax to (847) 967-5125.

3. Arrival in the Chicago area 48 hours prior to surgery for phalloplasty, metoidioplasty, or vaginoplasty. Individuals undergoing chest surgery, breast augmentation, facial feminization, or placement of testicular and/or penile implants may arrive in the Chicago area 24 hours prior to surgery.

4. Bowel Prep 24 hours prior if applicable (phalloplasty, metoidioplasty, vaginoplasty procedures)
PRE-SURGICAL CHECKLIST

☐ Obtain pre-surgical evaluation by primary care provider including:
   • CBC – (dated within 30 days of surgery)
   • BMP – if ordered (dated within 30 days of surgery)
   • Urinalysis and urine culture if ordered by Dr. Schechter
   • History and Physical examination by primary care provider (dated within 30 days of surgery)

Send pre-surgical evaluation to chopson@weisshospital.com or fax to (847) 967-5125 no later than two weeks before surgery

☐ Make arrangements for pre-operative and post-operative lodging/accommodations. Nancy Ritz, Executive Assistant for the Center for Gender Confirmation Surgery, at (773) 564-7238, can provide help with reservations and transportation.
   • Please note: We will provide a second bed for one companion to spend the night in your room during your stay at Weiss Hospital.

☐ Pack:
   • Robe and slippers
   • Dark, loose fitting clothing to wear after discharge (no tight elastic straps around waist or thighs)
   • Medications and medication list
   • Toiletries

☐ Purchase Bowel prep supplies (Only for Phalloplasty, Metoidioplasty, and Vaginoplasty)
   • Magnesium Citrate (10 oz.)
   • Miralax 238 grams
   • 1 can of 7up (or diet 7up)
   • Gatorade (Propel fitness water if diabetic)

☐ Contact Nancy Ritz and Angelica Sierra, Pre-Surgical Nurse, at (773) 564-7238, regarding hospital details and recovery plans. They will let you know the arrival time for the day of surgery and options during your hospital stay.
BOWEL PREP INSTRUCTIONS
(ONLY FOR VAGINOPLASTY, PHALLOPLASTY AND METOIDIOPLASTY)

All bowel prep ingredients can be found over the counter (no prescription needed)

- Magnesium Citrate (10 oz.)
- Miralax (238 grams)
- Can of 7up or diet 7up
- Gatorade (Propel fitness water if diabetic)

1. On the day before your scheduled surgery, you must have a clear liquid diet for the entire day. Avoid all red dye colored products. Clear liquids include apple juice, soda, Jell-O, chicken broth and tea.

2. At 11 a.m. drink a full bottle of Magnesium Citrate mixed equally with 7up or diet 7up. Drink within 15 minutes. For lunch continue on a clear liquid diet.

3. At 3 p.m. mix Miralax (238 grams) with Gatorade or Propel (64 oz.) and drink completely within 2 hours.

4. For dinner continue on a clear liquid diet.

5. Nothing to eat or drink after midnight.
GENDER CONFIRMATION KEY CONTACTS & ADDRESSES

Loren Schechter, MD  
Medical Director  
9000 Waukegan Road  
Suite 210  
Morton Grove, IL 60053  
(847) 967-5122 office  
(847) 967-5125 fax

Christina Hopson  
Gender Coordinator  
(847) 967-5122 office  
(847) 967-5125 fax  
chopson@weisshospital.com

Angelica Sierra, RN  
Pre-Surgical Nurse  
(773) 564-5850  
asierra@weisshospital.com

Jessica Bastidas, PA  
Gender Confirmation Physician Assistant  
(773) 564-7237 office  
(773) 652-0505 (pager, enter call back number#)  
jbastida@weisshospital.com

Pat Sullivan, MS, RN, FNP-C  
Lead Nurse Practitioner  
Department of Surgery  
(773) 564-5743 office  
psullivan@weisshospital.com

Martin King, RN  
8 South Unit Manager  
Gender Confirmation Resource Nurse  
(773) 564-5800 hospital  
making@weisshospital.com

Nancy Ritz  
Executive Assistant  
(773) 564-7238  
nritz@vhschicago.com

Weiss Memorial Hospital  
4646 N. Marine Drive  
Chicago, IL 60640  
(773) 878-8700
TRAVEL TO CHICAGO

Traveling by Plane
O’Hare International Airport, located 17 miles from downtown, is one of the largest airports in the world, servicing over 67 million passengers to and from over 200 destinations.

Midway International Airport, located 10 miles from downtown, is the nation’s premier point-to-point airport, offering travel to over 60 destinations.

Visit flychicago.com for details on amenities, flight status, terminal maps and more.

Taxi Service
Taxi fare from either airport to downtown will be approximately $50 to $60.

Public Transportation
The 24-hour CTA Blue Line train connects directly to O’Hare International Airport and the Orange Line connects directly to Midway International Airport. See transitchicago.com/airports for public transportation details to and from the airports. A transfer to the CTA Red Line train from the Blue Line and Orange Line trains is necessary. Train fare is $2.25 per trip.

GO Airport Express provides shared ride service to all downtown/suburban hotels and many businesses. Schedule a reservation at airportexpress.com.

Both airports offer car rentals from all major rental companies.

A private car service can also be reserved in advance. See pages 9 & 10 for more details.

Traveling by Train
Amtrak serves Chicago with about 50 trains arriving and departing daily. Visit amtrak.com for information about train travel options.
LOCAL TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Public Transportation
The Wilson and Lawrence train stations on the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Red Line are only four blocks from Weiss Memorial Hospital. Train fare is $2.25 per trip. The hospital can also be reached by the 146 bus. Bus fare is $2 per trip. Reaching Dr. Schechter's office via public transportation involves multiple transfers between Chicago and suburban buses and trains. Use the Chicago Transit Authority link below to plan your trip.

transitchicago.com/riding_cta/how_to_guides/findingyourway.aspx

Taxi Services
• Flash Cab (City Cab Service)
  Call (773) 561-4444 or web hail using flashcab.com/index.aspx
  Taxi trips from Chicago locations to the suburbs are charged straight meter to the city limits plus one-half the straight metered fare from the city limits to the suburban destination. Ask your driver to alert you when you reach the city limits.
• Park Ridge Taxi Cab (Morton Grove/Suburban Cab Service)
  Call (847) 979-5790 and ask for a rate when you call.
• Uber
  Call (877) 223-8023 for Chicago and surrounding suburbs.
  uber.com

Car Services
• Amm’s Limo
  Mention Weiss to get the best drivers and vehicles. You will be asked to give a credit card when setting up a ride.
  (773) 792-1126
  (773) 631-0703 fax

Sample Approximate Rates/Sedan (not including gratuity)
• O'Hare/Midway Airport to Weiss Memorial Hospital – $77 plus $4 tax
• Weiss Memorial Hospital to Dr. Schechter’s Office in Morton Grove – $72
• “Meet and Greet” at an airport (driver will meet passenger by baggage claim) – add $35
LOCAL TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS
(CONTINUED)

Car Services
• Chicago Private Car
  (773) 594-9021
  When setting up a ride, you will be asked to give a credit card.

  Sample Approximate Rates/Sedan (not including gratuity)
  • O'Hare International Airport to Weiss Memorial Hospital – $52
  • Midway International Airport to Weiss Memorial Hospital – $56
  • Weiss Memorial Hospital to Dr. Schechter’s Office in Morton Grove – $54
  • “Meet and Greet” at an airport (driver will meet passenger by baggage claim)
    – add $35

• Palomino Transportation
  Phil is the owner/driver. He can provide transportation from the city to the suburbs
  or vice versa, but can’t do point-to-point trips within the city limits. He has worked
  with many of Dr. Schechter’s patients.
  (847) 361-0152

Rental Car Options
• National Car Rental
  • O’Hare International Airport (ORD)
    (877) 222-9058
  • Midway International Airport (MDW)
    (877) 222-9058
  • Chicago
    203 N. La Salle Street
    (877) 222-9058

• Enterprise Rent-A-Car
  • O’Hare International Airport (ORD)
    (847) 928-3320
  • Midway International Airport (MDW)
    (773) 735-8860
  • Uptown
    5153 N. Sheridan Road
    Chicago, IL 60640
    (773) 271-4500
WEISS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL PARKING INFORMATION

Weiss Memorial Hospital’s main parking facility is a five-story covered building conveniently located across from the hospital at 4650 N. Clarendon Avenue.

There are reserved areas for the handicapped and medical staff; however, most of the facility is available to visitors, employees and monthly parkers. Public parking rates for the parking garage are as follows: $4 for the first hour; $8 for 1 to 3 hours; $10 for 3 to 5 hours; and $12 for 5 to 24 hours. If you are visiting a patient at Weiss, ask for a $2 off parking voucher at the hospital front desk.

The parking facility is open 24 hours, seven days a week.

In addition, valet service is available between 5:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., located at the front of the hospital, 4646 N. Marine Drive. Patient valet rates are $6 while individuals displaying a handicap license plate or handicap parking tag can park free of charge.

Weiss Memorial Hospital
4646 N. Marine Drive
Chicago, IL 60640

WeissHospital.com
LOCAL HOTEL INFORMATION

Best Western Plus Hawthorne Terrace Hotel (★★★★★)
3434 N. Broadway, Chicago, IL 60657
(773) 244-3434

This historic hotel is within 10 minutes’ walk of Wrigley Field and the Red Line train to downtown Chicago. It features a glass-enclosed hot tub and contemporary rooms with free WiFi.

A 42 inch flat-screen TV and laptop safe are included in each guest room at Best Western Hawthorne Terrace. A microwave, coffee maker, and refrigerator stocked with free bottled water are provided.

A selection of cardio machines is available at the Hawthorne Terrace’s on-site gym. The front desk offers concierge services 24 hours a day and a continental breakfast is served in the mornings. There is a lush and relaxing interior courtyard as well.

The shopping at the Magnificent Mile is just 20 minutes’ bus ride from the Best Western Plus Hawthorne Terrace Hotel. The Lincoln Park Zoo is 2 miles from the hotel.

Gender Diverse/Transgender Experience: TAG approved® as LGBT-friendly facility. Provides LGBTQ diversity and sensitivity training to staff.

Ask about the Weiss/Tenet Healthcare special patient 25% discount. Call Nancy Ritz, Executive Assistant, (773) 564-7238 for assistance in making a reservation or to check current rates.

2.6 miles from Weiss Memorial Hospital, 14.7 miles to Dr. Schechter’s office.
LOCAL HOTEL INFORMATION (CONTINUED)

Swissotel Chicago (★★★★)
323 E. Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 565-0565

Modern rooms have WiFi (surcharge), desks with ergonomic chairs, iPod docks and flat-screen TVs; suites add living rooms. Some upgraded quarters have views of Lake Michigan, plus gyms, full offices, dining tables, fireplaces and/or separate kids’ rooms.

Perks include a Swiss-inspired breakfast buffet (surcharge), penthouse fitness center, spa (fee), an indoor pool (fee), numerous event spaces and several dining options serving contemporary American fare, small plates and craft cocktails.

Gender Diverse/Transgender Experience: TAG approved® as LGBT-friendly facility. Provides LGBTQ diversity and sensitivity training to staff.

Ask about Weiss/Tenet Healthcare special rate of $115 to $229, depending on season and room type. Call Nancy Ritz, Executive Assistant, at (773) 564-7238 for assistance in making a reservation or to find out about convention/blackout dates when the hotel is likely to be booked.

5.7 miles from Weiss Memorial Hospital, 17.7 miles to Dr. Schechter’s office.
LOCAL HOTEL INFORMATION
(CONTINUED)

Hotel Lincoln (★★★★)
Kathleen Delaney, Business Travel Sales Manager, kdelaney@jdvhotels.com, (312) 254-4654
1816 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60614

Dating back to the 1920s, this funky vintage-style hotel is set in the Old Town Triangle off Lincoln Park and is 0.6 miles from the nearest El train station and 2 blocks from the Second City comedy club.

Decorated with original artwork from local artists, the contemporary rooms feature coffeemakers, flat-screen TVs, iPod docks and free WiFi. Many offer views of Lincoln Park or Lake Michigan. Suites add sitting areas with pull-out sofas. Amenities include 24-hour fitness and business centers, a farm-to-table restaurant and a rooftop lounge. Among the free perks are bike rentals, pedicabs, rooftop yoga classes and a wine hour.

Gender Diverse/Transgender Experience: TAG approved® as LGBT-friendly facility. Provides LGBTQ diversity and sensitivity training to staff.

The Weiss rate is 20% off the best available rate. Average rate is $105 to $250/night. Extended stay rate available for stays of 14–29 days, which is 40% off best available rate. Call Nancy Ritz, Executive Assistant, (773) 564-7238 for assistance in making a reservation or to check current rates.

Call (312) 254-4700 to schedule a reservation.

4 miles from Weiss Memorial Hospital, 16 miles from Dr. Schechter’s office.
LOCAL HOTEL INFORMATION
(CONTINUED)

The Guesthouse Hotel Chicago
Veronica Rosbolt, vrosbolt@theguesthousehotel.com
4872 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60640

In the historic Andersonville neighborhood, this brick condo building-turned-boutique hotel is 1 mile from Lake Michigan’s shore.

The modern 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom suites feature granite kitchens, private balconies or patios with gas grills, and washer/dryers. Each unit is equipped with such high-tech amenities as flat-screen TVs and free WiFi. Some have gas fireplaces and soaking tubs. Penthouse suites have a private rooftop deck with skyline views. Guests get use of a business center and fitness room.

Gender Diverse/Transgender Experience: Have a diverse clientele and are LGBTQ sensitive.

The Weiss average suite rate is $175 to $550/night, depending on season and availability. Extended stay rates are available. Call Nancy Ritz, Executive Assistant, (773) 564-7238 for assistance in making a reservation or to check current rates.

Call (773) 564-9568 to schedule a reservation.

1 mile from Weiss Memorial Hospital, 10.6 miles from Dr. Schechter’s office.
POST-DISCHARGE OPTIONS FOR **SKILLED NURSING CARE**

**Fairmont Care**  
Joanne Ventrella, Administrator, (773) 604-8112  
5061 N. Pulaski Road, Chicago, IL 60630

- Room and board (3 meals and snacks, special dietary needs accommodated)  
- 24-hour skilled nursing care, including pain control, incisional care, wound vacuum  
- Assistance with activities of daily living (bathing, dressing, walking, toileting)  
- Upscale facility with 20 private suites, includes full private bath with shower and bench, mini refrigerator, sitting area (can accommodate a guest on pull out sofa), desk, phone, WiFi, thermostat (heat and A/C), room service, three meals, snacks and anytime a la cart menu. Medications are not included in the room rate.  
- Will arrange for transportation to and from appointments for an additional fee.  
- Reservations required.  
- Has provided care for transgender patients.  
- Joint Commission certified.  
- 4.6 miles from Weiss Memorial Hospital, 8.2 miles from Dr. Schechter’s office.
POST-DISCHARGE OPTIONS FOR **SKILLED NURSING CARE**
(CONTINUED)

**Warren Barr Gold Coast**
Michael Cohen, Marketing Director, Patient Liaison, (312) 415-9754
66 W. Oak Street, Chicago, IL 60610

- Room and board (3 meals and snacks, special dietary needs accommodated)
- 24-hour skilled nursing care, including pain control, incisional care, wound vacuum
- Assistance with activities of daily living (bathing, dressing, walking, toileting)
- Complimentary car service to and from appointments by reservation
- Upscale facility in the heart of Chicago’s Gold Coast with 60 private rooms, including rooms with half baths and no shower (shower room) and rooms with full baths (with shower and bench in room), concierge service, room service or intimate dining areas, phone, WiFi, mini refrigerator. Medications are not included in the room rate.
- Reservations required.
- Joint Commission certified.
- 5.1 miles from Weiss Memorial Hospital, 16 miles from Dr. Schechter’s office.

**Warren Barr Lincoln Park**
Michael Cohen, Marketing Director, Patient Liaison, (312) 415-9754
2732 N. Hampden Court, Chicago, IL 60614

- Room and board (3 meals and snacks, special dietary needs accommodated)
- 24-hour skilled nursing care, including pain control, incisional care, wound vacuum
- Assistance with activities of daily living (bathing, dressing, walking, toileting)
- Upscale 89-bed facility with 14 private rooms available, private room accommodations include private bathroom, spa-room with shower located in hall, TV, cable, WiFi, call light, phone, love seat and/or chair, family member may stay in room with patient; cot or recliner on request. Lounge area/TV room, dining room, Library, beautifully furnished outdoor patio.
- Reservations required.
- Joint Commission certified.
- 2.7 miles from Weiss Memorial Hospital, 14.2 miles from Dr. Schechter’s office.
LOCAL FOOD & MEAL DELIVERY SERVICES

Grub Hub
Online restaurant delivery service. Delivers from a variety of restaurants.
grubhub.com/delivery/il-chicago

Eat 24
Online restaurant delivery service. Delivers from a variety of restaurants.
chicago.eat24hours.com

Go Puff Chicago
Online grocery and essential delivery service from 12 noon to midnight.
gopuff.com

Meez Meals
Online meal delivery service. Delivers prepped meals ready to cook. Includes options for meatless, vegan, low calorie/low fat, gluten-free meals.
Uptown, Chicago, IL 60640
(773) 916-6339
meezmeals.com

McDonalds
Fast food located less than 1 mile from Weiss Memorial Hospital
1004 W. Wilson Avenue, Chicago, IL 60640
(773) 275-9885

Real Kitchen
Sustainable-practice online meal delivery service. Delivers meals ready to heat up.
1433 W. Montrose Avenue, Chicago, IL 60613
(773) 281-2888
montrose.realkitchenchicago.com
LOCAL PHARMACIES

Walgreens
walgreens.com

4720 N. Marine Drive (at Weiss)
Chicago, IL 60640
(773) 769-1315

3646 N. Broadway Street (near Weiss)
Chicago, IL 60613
(773) 549-3808

5440 N. Clark Street (near Weiss)
Chicago, IL 60640
(773) 596-5022

2500 N. Clark Street (near Warren Barr Lincoln Park)
Chicago, IL 60614
(773) 929-7488

2817 N. Clark Street (near Warren Barr Lincoln Park)
Chicago, IL 60657
(773) 327-6119

933 N. State Street (near Warren Barr Gold Coast)
Chicago, IL 60610
(312) 943-0671

1200 N. Dearborn Street (near Warren Barr Gold Coast)
Chicago, IL 60610
(312) 943-0973

4010 W. Lawrence Avenue (near Fairmont Care)
Chicago, IL 60630
(773) 286-0309

4343 N. Kedzie Avenue (near Fairmont Care)
Chicago, IL 60618
(773) 604-4419
LOCAL PHARMACIES
(CONTINUED)

CVS
cvs.com

4466 N. Broadway Street (near Weiss, in a Target store)
Chicago, IL 60640
(773) 596-2377

5205 N. Broadway Street (near Weiss)
Chicago, IL 60640
(773) 275-5641

2650 N. Clark Street (near Warren Barr Lincoln Park)
Chicago, IL 60657
(773) 525-0179

2828 N. Clark Street (near Warren Barr Lincoln Park)
Chicago, IL 60657
(773) 525-1377

1165 N. Clark Street (near Warren Barr Gold Coast)
Chicago, IL 60610
(312) 280-8140

1201 N. State Street (near Warren Barr Gold Coast)
Chicago, IL 60610
(312) 640-2842

4540 N. Pulaski Road (near Fairmont Care)
Chicago, IL 60630
(773) 283-5777

3343 W. Montrose Avenue (near Fairmont Care)
Chicago, IL 60618
(773) 279-2929
LOCAL WEBSITES & RESOURCES

Weiss Memorial Hospital
weisshospital.com

Gender Confirmation Surgery
weissgendersurgery.com

Warren Barr Lincoln Park
warrenbarrlincolnpark.com

Warren Barr Gold Coast
warrenbarrgoldcoast.com

Fairmont Care
fairmontcare.com

Swisshotel Chicago
swissotel.com/hotels/chicago

Hotel Lincoln
jdvhotels.com/hotels/illinois/chicago-hotels/hotel-lincoln

The Guesthouse Hotel Chicago
theguesthousehotel.com

Howard Brown Health
howardbrown.org

Chicagoland LGBTQ Services
chicagolgbtservices.org/placecategory/trans-primarycare

Center on Halsted
centeronhalsted.org/programsoverview.html

Chicago Transit Authority
transitchicago.com

O’Hare and Midway International Airports
flychicago.com

Airport Express
airportexpress.com

Amtrak
amtrak.com

Flash Cab (City Cab Service)
flashcab.com/index.aspx

Uber
uber.com

Grub Hub
grubhub.com/delivery/il-chicago

Eat 24
chicago.eat24hours.com

Go Puff Chicago
gopuff.com

Meez Meals
meezmeals.com

Real Kitchen
montrose.realkitchenchicago.com

Walgreens Pharmacy
walgreens.com

CVS Pharmacy
cvs.com
TRAVELER SAFETY TIPS

Chicago's tourist areas and most neighborhoods are generally quite safe.

General Precautions

• Stay alert and tuned-in to your surroundings.

• Walk in well-lighted areas; stay away from alleys.

• Do not listen to headphones or talk on the phone while out alone, this minimizes your ability to hear an approaching threat and advertises to a would-be thief that you may have a desirable item to attempt to steal.

• Be wary of unsolicited strangers. If someone approaches you on the street, keep moving and try to avoid additional contact. Also beware of someone jostling you and of loud arguments; these could be ploys to distract your attention while another person grabs your wallet.

• Keep your wallet in a front coat or pants pocket.

• Close your bag or purse securely and keep it close to you.

Public Transportation Safety

Keep your phone and other portable electronic devices out of sight on train platforms. Look alert and purposeful; know your route ahead of time; have your fare ready before boarding; and keep an eye on your purse or packages during the ride. Avoid taking public transit late at night.