Three steps to prepare for activating this trial at your institution

1. **Become a credentialed enrolling surgeon.**

   To ensure high-quality TME in this trial, surgeons are asked to undergo a credentialing process. Credentialing material includes operative and pathology reports of 10 rectal cancer resections performed within the last three years, and photographs (showing anterior and posterior views) of three different TME specimens.

   Surgeons should e-mail this material to tme_cred4prospect@calgb.org as soon as possible. They will be notified by the credentialing committee within two weeks.

   Surgeons previously credentialed for the American College of Surgeons Oncology Group (ACOSOG) trial Z6051 or previously instructed in the Total Mesorectal Excision Surgical Skilled Optimization Program are exempt from this credentialing process.

2. **Assemble a local study team.**

   Surgeons should identify a medical oncologist with whom they can partner as co-principal investigators at the local institution. Due to the complexity of the trial, collaboration from medical and radiation oncology will be critical.

3. **Submit the study protocol to the local institutional review board for approval.**

   This step is a prerequisite for trial activation and patient accrual at the local institution.