



As we are all unique individuals, so is each person's experience in the immediate post-operative period. Depending on the type of surgery, the type of anesthesia, and the length of your surgery, you could experience some or all the effects as shown below. These are all normal and you should have no cause for concern.

### **WILL I HAVE A LOT OF PAIN?**

This is a very common question, but ALL surgical procedures will leave you with some degree of pain or discomfort, especially after the local anesthetic has worn off, which could be after you get home. Everyone has different pain thresholds, and we will help you manage your pain while you are in the Recovery Room. The nursing staff will be spending time instructing you how to use prescription or over the counter pain control medicines at home. Not all surgery will require the use of a narcotic pain medicine.

### **MANAGING YOUR PAIN LEVEL**

Pain is commonly felt at the site of the incision, and movement can cause an increase in this pain. Follow your surgeon's instructions regarding activity allowed after your surgery.

Some Ob/Gyn surgery may cause pain to "radiate" to other parts of the body, including up to the shoulder area, and this is normal and no cause for alarm. A dramatic sudden increase in the pain level that is not relieved by rest and your pain medicine, accompanied by high fever (101 degrees) should be reported to your surgeon.

It should be noted that being pain free after a surgical procedure is not a reasonable expectation.

## AFTER YOUR DISCHARGE

We do not allow you to go home in a taxi or Uber. It is **required** that you are driven home by a responsible person with whom you are familiar with.

We advise you to go home and rest for the remainder of the day.

## WHEN CAN I EAT AFTER MY SURGERY?

You will be offered a light snack and drink in the Recovery Room. Some oral surgery allows only cool fluids to begin. We will instruct you according to your surgeon's orders. In all cases, it is better to begin slowly with your diet and then increase as you feel able. It is generally preferred to eat small light meals on the day after your surgery.

## DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

We will go through your discharge instructions and education after you are awake. You will have all the information written down, along with a phone number to call if you have any questions or concerns. You will also need to schedule your follow up appointment with your surgeon. **Please note, you may not remember all that you were told due to the anesthesia you received.** Additionally, our nurse will have reviewed all your instructions with the responsible party who drives you home. We suggest you re-read your discharge instructions when you arrive home, and again the day after your surgery to ensure you are adequately informed.

You will see your surgeon for your post-operative visit at his or her office, **not** at this Surgery Center.

## WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER ANESTHESIA? TYPES OF ANESTHESIA

**You must not drive on the day of your anesthesia.**

➤ **AFTER TWILIGHT/MAC (Monitored Anesthesia Care)/SEDATION**  
Go home and rest. It is normal to feel groggy, lightheaded, unsteady, especially for seniors and young adults. These effects will go away by the next day, and this will not delay your discharge home. Most patients leave the surgery center feeling groggy, and this is normal.

The incidence of nausea and vomiting is generally low, although this can be a side effect of sedation for some. Plan on eating small light meals to reduce this. Fluids are encouraged.

➤ **AFTER A GENERAL ANESTHESIA** (Where the use of a breathing tube is required)

This will require a slightly longer stay in the Recovery Room. We will monitor your heart, blood pressure and oxygen levels frequently. You will hear the monitors beeping, and this is no cause for concern. After you are more awake, we will discontinue the use of the monitors and move you to an area where we will offer you a light snack and a drink. Some patients will be placed in a comfortable recliner chair as part of their recovery steps.

As soon as you have met discharge criteria and we have given you and your responsible family member your post-operative instructions, we will send you home. Please note that you will feel groggy, lightheaded and tired. This is all part of the effect of anesthesia and will likely continue for the rest of the day at home. Plan to go straight home and rest!

You likely will not have much of an appetite, this is okay, but do try and keep up with your fluid intake.

It is common to have a sore throat after this type of anesthesia, and this will resolve in a few days.

We will do our best to keep symptoms of nausea at bay. Please notify us if you are prone to post-operative nausea and/or car or motion sickness. We will give you medicine to try and prevent this.

Effects from a general anesthesia can be lethargy, a decrease in appetite, constipation, and a change in sleep patterns.

#### ➤ **AFTER A SPINAL ANESTHESIA**

Many of our surgeries are done under a spinal anesthetic as it is safe and extremely effective. Patients do very well, as they awaken much quicker and have less pain and the chance of nausea is greatly reduced.

The spinal numbs the body from the waist down. Most of this wears off before you leave, but some numbness may remain in the upper thigh and hip area, and this will resolve at home. Some patients may be required to empty their bladder as this is also affected by the spinal. If you have any bladder or prostate concerns let the anesthesia staff know, as you may require additional time in the Recovery Room. This is on an individual basis and is a normal part of recovery from spinal anesthesia.

If you are not required to empty your bladder prior to discharge, specific instructions about what to do if you cannot urinate within a given time frame will be communicated to you. The nurses will determine when you are ready to try and get out of bed and will assist you. You will not be permitted to leave until you are safely standing and walking unassisted. This can take up to 4 hours. There is no way to predict exact time.

### **DAY AFTER SURGERY PHONE CALL**

The nursing staff at Paoli Surgery Center will reach out to you by phone the next business day to check on your recovery and will be happy to answer any of your questions. If we are unable to reach you by phone, we will leave a message and you are welcome to return the call to us at 610-408-0822 and press 6 for the Recovery Room.

If we are not able to leave a message via the phone number given, we will send a message by text/email via our patient portal.

It is important to know that **everyone recovers differently from surgery**. Some may feel more pain and others none at all. There is no way for you or us to know how your post-operative journey will be, but we will try and make this experience at Paoli Surgery Center as positive and as easy as we can. We would like to know that at the end of the day, you would gladly come to us again if ever the need arose or recommend us to your family and friends. We take pride in providing the best healthcare for you.

**THANK YOU!**

**YOUR PAOLI SURGERY CENTER HEALTHCARE TEAM**