



ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

ASPAN Patient Information:

Outpatient Surgery

What is “outpatient” surgery?

Outpatient surgery is when you have a surgical procedure done and then later that same day you go home. Outpatient surgery can also be called “same-day” surgery or ambulatory surgery.

With all the new advances with technology, anesthesia methods, and how your pain is managed, many surgeries are now being performed as outpatient.

Not everyone will be able to have outpatient surgery because of the type of procedure that needs to be performed. There are many different things that doctors will consider to determine if a patient qualifies for same day surgery or if the surgery will require you to stay.

How quickly can I go home after outpatient surgery?

The type of surgical procedure, type of anesthesia, and your medical history will determine how long you will stay.

The type of anesthesia you were given (how you are sedated or if you were asleep for your surgery) will determine which type of room you will be assigned. You will either be taken to the postanesthesia care unit (PACU) or an outpatient postoperative care area. When you are in these rooms, you will be monitored and you may need to demonstrate some simple tasks before you can leave. These tasks may include drinking some fluids and eating some food without getting sick to your stomach. In some cases, you may need to be required to pass urine as well.

What do I need to know before I go home?

Before you are sent home, the nurse will go over your after surgery instructions with you and your family/friend. The goal is to teach you what you will need to do when you are home. The nurse will go over the following with you:

- Activities you can do
- What you are allowed to eat
- How to help manage your pain
- When you should see your doctor again
- How to take care of your wound/stitches
- Anything special related to the procedure you had done
- The medicine you are taking

It is very important that you ask questions and are familiar with how to care for yourself once you leave.

Can I drive myself home?

After you have outpatient surgery, you are not allowed to drive home. It is also important that you have a family/friend stay with you for 24 hours after your procedure.

Will someone follow up on me after surgery?

Depending on where you have your procedure done, a nurse will usually call you the next day. He or she will ask you how you are doing and ask if you have any further questions. Please make sure that the phone number you leave with the staff is correct and a number where they can easily get in touch with you.

Why is it important for me to know what to expect?

Having surgery can make you nervous. Knowing what to expect can help answer any questions you may have and help you feel more comfortable with what you are having done. Every surgery is different. Your doctor can provide all the details, information and answer your questions for you. The more you know about your procedure, the better you can take part in getting well.