



ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

ASPAN Patient Information:

What to Expect If You Are Going Home on the Day of Surgery

Once your surgery is over and you have been moved from the postanesthesia care unit (PACU), you will either be sent to an inpatient bed or taken to the area where the nurses will get you ready to go home.

What do I need to know before going home?

Before leaving the building, you must meet certain discharge criteria. You may be asked to urinate before going home after certain surgical procedures. If you had a spinal anesthetic, you may be sent home with special instructions about what you should do if you cannot urinate within a certain time period.

Your nurse will go over your post-operative/after surgery instructions with you and your family/friend. The goal is to teach you several things about going home. These things include:

- Pain medicines
- Special diet plans
- Special instructions related to your surgery
- Follow up with your surgeon
- Signs to watch for infection
- When you should report to your surgeon

If you have stopped taking medications before your surgery, your nurse or doctor will let you know when you can start taking them again. You may also be given a prescription from your doctor at this time.

How long will it take me to feel normal again?

Be prepared at home to continue your recovery. Plan to take it easy for a few days until you feel back to normal. Patients often feel minor effects following surgery due to anesthesia, which might include:

- Being very tired
- Muscle aches
- A sore throat
- Dizziness
- Headaches

Sometimes patients can feel very sick to their stomach and may throw up. These side effects usually go away quickly in the first few hours after surgery, but it can take several days before they are completely gone. Due to feeling tired or having some discomfort, most patients do not feel up to their normal activities for several days.

Can I drive myself home?

Patients who have outpatient/same day surgery must have someone drive them home and stay with for 24 hours following their surgery. The medications you were give during your surgery may affect your memory and mental judgment for the next 24 hours. During that time frame, do not use alcoholic

beverages and tobacco products. It is also advised for you not to make any important business or personal decisions and do not use machinery or electrical equipment.

In a day or two after surgery, a nurse may call to check to see how you are feeling. It is important that you provide the staff with a correct working phone number so they can contact you.