

Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS)

What is ERAS?

Enhanced recovery is a set of instructions that you and your care team will follow to help improve your experience before, during, and after surgery. It helps you to recover sooner so life can return to normal as quickly as possible.

Why do we use ERAS?

ERAS is proven to speed up recovery and lower the chance of problems after surgery.

What are the main parts of ERAS?

1. Preparing for surgery
 - Your doctors will make sure you are healthy enough for surgery.
 - You will be given plenty of information from your care team so you feel ready for surgery.
2. Reducing the physical stress of the operation
 - You will be allowed to drink certain liquids up to two hours before your surgery.
 - Your care team will make sure you stay warm, hydrated, and safe.
3. Relieving symptoms effectively
 - We will give you a combination of medicines to help keep you comfortable while minimizing side effects.
 - We may ask you to take certain medications before surgery to help prevent pain and nausea.
4. Ensuring a healthy recovery
 - You will be encouraged to eat, drink, and walk around as soon as you can after surgery.
 - Your care team will help to make your recovery as smooth as possible.

What can you do to help?

It is important that you know what to expect before, during, and after your surgery. Your care team will work closely with you to plan your treatment. In addition, read these instructions carefully and follow them closely. Be sure to ask questions if you have any.

It is important for you to participate in your recovery and to follow the advice of your care team. By working together, we hope to make your recovery as easy as possible.

What are the specific instructions you should follow?

On the next page you will find instructions for how to make ERAS a successful part of your care. Remember, your doctor will provide other instructions that are specific to your surgery. If you have questions about what to do, be sure to ask.

Instructions for ERAS

Food and Drink: ERAS has changed the rules about eating and drinking before surgery!

- You may eat **light snacks** (nothing heavy or fatty) until six hours before your scheduled surgery time but nothing after that.
 - Example: If your surgery is scheduled for noon, you may eat a light breakfast at 5:30 a.m. but no food after 6 a.m.
- You may drink **clear liquids** (drinks you can see through) until two hours before your scheduled surgery time but nothing after that.
- **If you are diabetic** be sure to choose drinks with fewer than 5 gm carbohydrates per serving (*like “diet” juices, unsweetened tea/coffee, or sugar free sports drinks).
- **All patients** (even diabetics) **should** drink 16 oz. of regular Gatorade two hours before your scheduled surgery time (but **nothing** after that).

Examples of Clear Liquids

Water (sparkling or regular)

Juice without pulp (apple or cranberry)*

Fat free broth or bouillon

Black coffee or black tea* (without milk or cream)

Sports drinks like Gatorade or Powerade*

**If you are diabetic, use the recommended low-sugar alternatives*

Pain Medications: Pain control is a big part of a healthy recovery!

- Your doctor may ask you to take up to three different pain medications just before surgery. This helps to prevent the pain from even starting.
- Pain relief is best when we use several medications that attack the pain in different ways.
- Opiate medications have a lot of side effects so we try to control pain in other ways, first.

Nausea Medications: Controlling nausea will help you feel better sooner!

- Your doctor may have you place a small patch behind your ear before surgery to prevent nausea. Remember to let your nurse know if you put the patch on at home.
- Chewing gum can help to prevent nausea after surgery and is safe once you are awake.

Activity After Surgery: This is where we need your help!

- Walking and deep breathing exercises help to prevent dangerous problems after surgery.
- Most patients are able to walk within a few hours of surgery, and we will help you to do so.
- Eating your meals in a chair instead of in bed is safer and helps you remember to move around.
- If you wake up with a catheter in your bladder, your nurse will remove it as soon as it is safe, which is usually within a few hours of surgery.
- You will wake up with an IV which can be unplugged from the machine as soon as you are drinking liquids after surgery.