

A guide for patients and families

Anaesthesia & You



Introduction to Anaesthesia



Anaesthesia is a state of reversible 'loss of sensation'. It stops you from feeling pain and other unpleasant sensations, though not all types of anaesthesia will render you unconscious.

Anaesthesia can be given in various ways and can also be directed to different parts of the body.

A doctor (anaesthetist) will be with you throughout the procedure to care for you. Anaesthetists are specialist trained in:

- ◆ Anaesthesia
- ◆ Pain Management
- ◆ Critical Care
- ◆ Emergency Medicine



Types of Anaesthesia

GENERAL ANAESTHESIA



You will be put into a state of controlled unconsciousness. This is like a deep sleep produced by either injecting medication into your veins or breathing a special gas. You will be woken up when your operation is over.

REGIONAL ANAESTHESIA



Local anaesthetic drugs are injected near specific nerves to take away pain during the surgery. You will be awake but we can put you into a light sleep if needed.

The common types of regional anaesthesia are spinal and epidural anaesthesia. These can be used for operations on the lower body such as the hip, knee and prostate.

Our doctors will discuss with you the benefits and risks of the different types of anaesthesia suitable for you. You can then make a choice which you would prefer.

Preparations for Your Anaesthesia

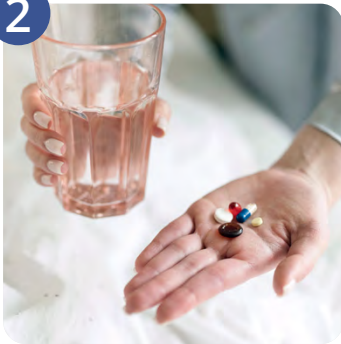
1



FASTING

Our staff will give you clear instructions about fasting. Please follow these instructions carefully. If fasting is inadequate, food or liquid may be present in your stomach. This food or liquid could move up to the back of your throat and then into your lungs during anaesthesia. This can potentially cause serious lung damage.

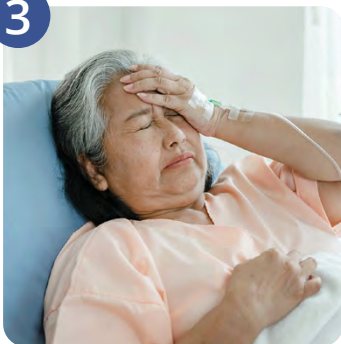
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YOUR MEDICATION

You should continue taking your normal medicine up to and including the day of surgery, unless your doctor or nurse has asked you not to. If you are not sure about your medication, please consult our staff.

3



WHAT TO DO WHEN UNWELL

If you feel unwell when you are due for operation, please inform the hospital. Depending on the illness and urgency, your operation may be postponed until you feel better for your safety.

Pain Relief

Good pain relief is important. It reduces stress and suffering, and promotes faster recovery.

Methods of Pain Relief



PILLS, TABLETS OR LIQUIDS

These medicines need to be taken orally.



INJECTIONS

Pain medicine is either injected into your vein, buttock or thigh.



SUPPOSITORIES

There are also pain medicines, in the form of pellets, which are inserted into the rectum. They are useful when you cannot take drugs orally.



PATIENT-CONTROLLED ANALGESIA

This method uses a machine that allows you to control your own pain relief. The machine has a pump, which is linked to a handset. When you press the button on the handset, the pump will deliver a dose of pain medicine into your vein.



LOCAL ANAESTHETICS & REGIONAL BLOCKS

These methods can be very useful for relieving pain during and after surgery.

You may discuss with your doctor the various pain relief methods before your surgery. This would allow you to make an informed decision about which method you would prefer.

Side Effects and Complications of Anaesthesia

Common (1:10 to 1:100)



- ◆ Vomiting or nausea
- ◆ Dizziness
- ◆ Shivering
- ◆ Backache
- ◆ Sore throat
- ◆ Bruising and soreness around drip sites
- ◆ Headache
- ◆ Itch
- ◆ Pain during injection of drugs
- ◆ Hoarseness of voice
- ◆ Confusion or memory loss (Temporary)

Uncommon (1:1000 to 1:10000)



- ◆ Chest infection
- ◆ Awareness during surgery
- ◆ Muscle pain
- ◆ Existing medical condition getting worse
- ◆ Damage to teeth, lips or tongue
- ◆ Difficulty in passing urine
- ◆ Damage to voice box
- ◆ Heart attack and stroke

Rare (1:100,00 to 1:100,000)



- ◆ Damage to the eyes
- ◆ Nerve damage
- ◆ Serious allergy to drugs
- ◆ Equipment failure
- ◆ Death

Safety of Anaesthesia

The risk of anaesthesia depends on the type of surgery you are having, any medical problems you might have (e.g. diabetes or heart problems) or even your personal habits like smoking or being overweight.

We would like to assure you that appropriate care will be taken to prevent or minimise any unpleasant experience during your anaesthesia and surgery.

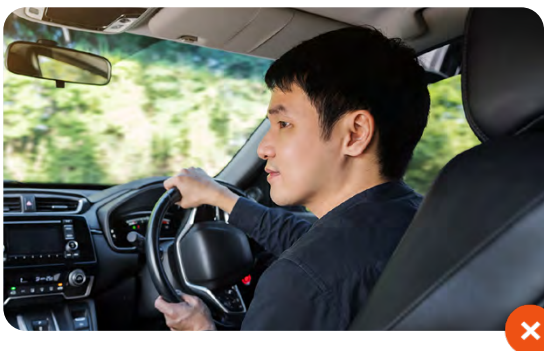
Care and Management

PRE PROCEDURE



Do refer to the pre procedure instruction guidelines provided for your specific procedure as ordered by your physician.

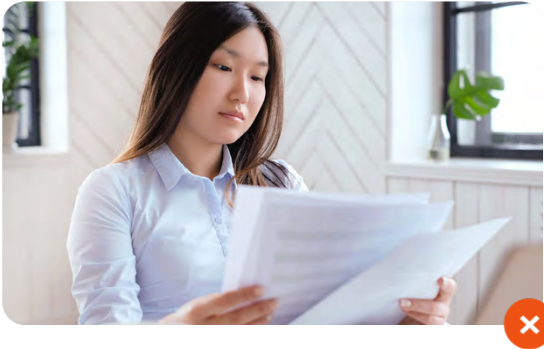
POST PROCEDURE



DO NOT operate heavy machinery or any vehicle.



DO NOT consume alcohol or take medications such as sleeping pills, tranquilizers, etc.



AVOID performing task that requires skills, co-ordination or judgement such as financial transaction or legal documentation.



Do arrange for someone to accompany you back home if possible.



Do observe for persistence of symptoms such as:

- ◆ Vomiting or nausea
- ◆ Dizziness
- ◆ Shivering
- ◆ Backache
- ◆ Bruising and soreness around drip sites
- ◆ Sore throat
- ◆ Hoarseness of voice
- ◆ Headache
- ◆ Itch
- ◆ Pain and swelling at injection site
- ◆ Confusion or memory loss (temporary)



CAUTION on fall risk if feeling unwell.



Consume soft and light diet before increasing the amount as tolerated.



Ensure adequate rest for the next 24 hrs post procedure.

Others

You may wish to proceed to your own attending or nearest hospitals for medical attention and advice.



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