

Patient Information Sheet: Major Bowel Surgery

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TODAY?

1. You will meet your nurse. An intravenous line will be placed in your arm.
2. One hour before your surgery, you will be transported by stretcher to Pre-op holding. There you will meet several nurses who make sure everything is ready. You will be asked to sign permission slips for the Surgery and Anesthesia. You will be shaved where your incision will be.
3. You will be given medicine in the pre-op holding area to make you more comfortable. You may not remember anything after this.

HOW WILL THE PAIN BE CONTROLLED?

There are three different techniques for pain control.

1. An Epidural Catheter:
This is a 'spinal' that stays in you for several days. This allows constant numbing of pain fibers in the area of surgery.
2. Patient Controlled Anesthesia Pump:
Your pain is controlled by intravenous medicines. When you feel the need for more medicine, you can push a button yourself, and receive a 'boost'.
3. Pain Shots and IV Medicines are given every 3-4 hours as needed.

Be sure you know how to best use the method of pain control your surgeon chooses.

Your nurse will ask you to rate your pain on a scale from 0-10. Your doctor and nurse will use your input to fine-tune your pain control. Let them know what is an O.K. pain level.

CAN I GET UP AND WALK BY MYSELF?

Not the first time. Let your nurse help you. Its important to make sure you are steady with your steps. Once the nurses say it is ok, you are encouraged to walk on your own.

This is the single best thing you can do to help yourself recover.

Goals for Walking the Full Length of the Hallway

1st Day	4 Times
2nd Day	5 Times
3rd Day	6 Times

HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THE HOSPITAL?

Everyone is different. Some go home the 3rd day after surgery. Others need more time. No two people are the same.

WHEN AM I READY TO GO HOME?

- k When you are taking liquids without nausea or vomiting.
- k When you are able to take pain medication as a pill.
- k When you are without fever, or signs of infection.
- k When bowel function has resumed.