



Sentara OrthoJoint Center®

Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS)



Patient information

Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) is a proven group of activities that will help improve surgical healing. This will explain the steps you and your healthcare team will take to control discomfort and speed recovery. ERAS protocols include taking non-narcotic medications around the clock to control discomfort, getting out of bed soon after surgery, walking frequently, gum chewing and eating solid foods early — in the hospital and at home.

The keys to enhanced recovery

- Patient education
- Early mobility and frequent walking
- Starting pain control **before** surgery
- Eating as soon as safely possible
- Controlling pain using different types of medications **after** surgery
- Breathing exercises to maintain good lung function

Why is walking so important after surgery?

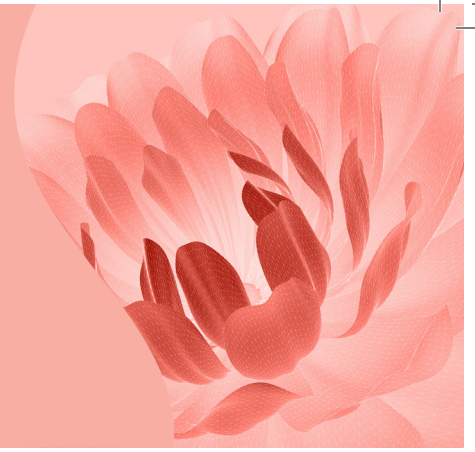
- Improves bowel and bladder functions, which are slowed with surgery
- Increases oxygen flow, which improves healing
- Strengthens muscle tone
- Helps prevent blood clots

What can happen if you don't walk after surgery?

- Constipation
- Weakness
- Pneumonia
- Increased risk of blood clots
- Pressure injuries

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Before surgery

Diet

- Stop solid foods after midnight the day before surgery or as instructed by your care team
- Drink a carb-loading beverage (lighter colors, no red) as instructed by your care team

Shower

- Bacteria can cause infections. To reduce bacteria on your skin, shower with antibacterial soap as instructed by your surgeon's office prior to surgery.
 - Use a freshly laundered towel and wear clean laundered clothing to reduce the transmission of bacteria to your clean skin

Chewing gum or hard candy

- Bring your favorite sugarless gum or hard candy with you on the day of surgery
- Chewing gum or consuming hard candy following surgery helps bowel function return
- Chew gum or consume hard candy 3 times a day or more, starting 1-hour post-surgery

Early mobility goals

Day of surgery

- Out of bed as able with assistance from your care team
- Perform ankle pumps
- Eat all meals in a chair

First day after surgery

- Walk at least 3 times with assistance
- Maintain or increase walking each day as tolerated
- Return to a regular diet and eat all meals in a chair

Postoperative goal reminders

- Chew sugar-free gum or hard candy to help with the return of normal bowel function
- Sit up in the chair for all meals
- Continue breathing exercises: use the incentive spirometer 10 times every hour
- Prevent life-threatening blood clots: wear Sequential Compression Devices (SCDs) at least 18 hours a day
- Perform ankle pumps
- Pain Management: your physician will order various methods of non-narcotic pain medication around the clock for pain management

General criteria for discharge

- Stable vital signs and no signs of infection
- Passing flatus or "gas"
- Tolerating your diet and medications without nausea or vomiting
- Pain controlled by oral medication
- Ability to safely walk household distances
- Have a caregiver available to stay with you for the first few days and act as your "Coach"