

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 — whether in the hospital or 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
- It helps prevent blood clots

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

- Constipation
- Weakness
- Pneumonia
- Pressure injuries on the skin



Before surgery

Diet

- Stop solid foods 8 hours before surgery
- Drink Gatorade (lighter colors):
 - If you are **NON-DIABETIC**, drink 12oz Gatorade Powerade (light color) or 10 oz Ensure Pre-Surgery Clear drink 2 hours before surgery and before checking in. For example, if your surgery is scheduled for 7:30 a.m., you need to complete your drink by 5:30 a.m.
 - If you are **DIABETIC**, drink a 12oz G2 or Powerade Zero (light color) or 10 oz Ensure Pre-Surgery Clear drink 2 hours before surgery. For example, if your surgery is scheduled for 7:30 a.m., please complete your drink by 5:30 a.m.

Shower

- Bacteria may cause an infection in your incision site. To reduce bacteria on your skin, shower with antibacterial soap provided by your surgeon's office (CHG Wash) or antibacterial soap as directed
 - Use a freshly laundered towel and wear clean laundered clothing to reduce the transmission of bacteria to your clean skin

Chewing gum

- Bring your favorite sugarless gum or hard candy
- Gum chewing following surgery helps bowel function to return
- Chew gum 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 robust ankle pumps
- Eat all meals in a chair

Begin post-op day 1

- 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 lozenges 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 robust 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 someone to stay with you for the first few days and act as your "Coach"