

BWH/BWFH ERAS Patient Education

Planning for Surgery

At Brigham and Women's Hospital and Brigham and Women's Faulkner Hospital, we have an effort underway to try to help you recover faster after surgery. You might hear this type of care referred to as ERAS (Enhanced Recovery After Surgery). This document will guide you through the process before and after your surgery.

If anything is not clear to you or if you have any questions about your care, please ask any member of your surgical team (doctor, PA, NP, nurse).

How Should I Prepare Before My Surgery?

- Prepare a complete list of your allergies, home medications, supplements, and medical and surgical history.
- You will either have an in-person pre-op appointment at the Weiner Center to discuss these, or you will speak to someone on the phone about your medical history ("phone screen").
- If you have an in-person pre-op appointment, you will be given **two** 12 ounce bottles of Clearfast and instructions on when to drink it. Clearfast is a drink that helps prepare you for surgery. If you have a phone screen, you will be instructed to buy two 12 ounce bottles of **Gatorade Thirst Quenchers**. It is important to buy Gatorade Thirst Quenchers as this formula has the correct amount of sugar you need.
 - If you are a diabetic, please drink **one** 12 oz bottle of the Clearfast and **one** 12 oz bottle of **Gatorade Zero**.
- Please **refrigerate** your Clearfast liquid once you get home. **Do not** add ice or any other liquid to your Clearfast or Gatorade because this will weaken it.
- The staff will go over what you should do before your surgery and the day of your surgery.
- Please use the Hibiclens wash given to you in the Weiner Center as instructed before surgery. If you have a phone screen, please shower with Dial soap and water on the three days prior to your surgery.

On the Day of your Surgery:

- Take your home medications as instructed during your pre-op appointment.
- Start drinking your Clearfast or Gatorade drink **three hours before** the time of your surgery.
- Make sure you have **finished both bottles by two hours before** the time of your surgery.
 - For example, if your surgery is scheduled for 7:30AM, start drinking the first bottle at 4:30AM and finish both bottles of Clearfast /Gatorade by 5:30AM.
- If you have questions on the timing of your Clearfast/Gatorade please call your surgeon's office.

| | EXAMPLE: Surgery at 7:00 am | Your Surgery: |
|--|---|---|
| Start drinking 3 hours before Surgery | Surgery time (7:00am) – 3 hours= 4:00 am | Surgery time – 3 hours: ____:____ - 3:00 = |
| Finish drinking 2 hours before surgery | Surgery time (7:00 am) – 2 hours = 5:00 am | Surgery time – 2 hours: ____:____ -2:00 = |

Please flip over for additional information.

At the Hospital on the Day of Your Surgery:

- You will have an Intravenous (IV) put in that will be used for your anesthesia and any other medications before and after surgery.
- Your healthcare team will talk to you on the day of surgery about managing your pain. You may be offered a paravertebral block prior to anesthesia.
 - A “paravertebral block” is when a numbing medication is put around nerves just after they exit between the bones of your spine.
 - Numbing these nerves will reduce the pain you feel after the surgery for 12 to 24 hours.
 - This procedure, which takes about 10 to 30 minutes, is done by your specially trained anesthesia team to lower the pain that you feel after some kinds of surgery on the chest or abdomen.
 - In addition to lowering your pain, the block can also lower the amount of pain medicine you require both during and after your procedure, and it can help shorten your hospital stay.
 - Paravertebral blocks are combined with general anesthesia.

Recovering in the Hospital:

- After your surgery, you will be taken to the PACU (Post-Acute Care Unit) to recover from anesthesia.
- Recovery from anesthesia can take 1 to 1.5 hours.
- A small amount of pain is normal after surgery. Your doctors and nurses will work with you to make sure you are comfortable.
- Your nurse will let you know when you can eat and drink. This will likely be a few hours after your surgery.
- It is very important to get out of bed following surgery so you don't get a blood clot. Your nurse will help you do this while in the hospital, and you will be encouraged to continue moving upon discharge.
- You may be seen by physical therapy.
- You should expect to be weighed by the nursing staff as part of our ERAS protocol.
- If you are going home with services, the case management team will help arrange VNA (visiting nurse to your home after surgery) services for you.
- Most patients should plan to go home the day after surgery. Some surgeries allow patients to go home on the same day as surgery. Some surgeries require an extended inpatient stay. This will be discussed with you by your surgeon.

We want you to be successful in your surgery. Please call your surgeon's office with any questions. Thank you for participating in your care!