

Health Facts

for you

Going Home after Spinal, Epidural, or Nerve Block Anesthesia

- You should have someone (age 16 or older) stay with you for the rest of today and tonight. This is for your own safety and protection.
- You may feel a little sleepy for the next 12 to 24 hours. This is partly due to the medicines you receive during and after surgery. Rest and relax for the next 12 hours. Avoid hazardous or strenuous activity.

For The Next 24 Hours, Even If You Feel Normal

- Don't drive a car, motorcycle, or bike. Don't operate machinery or power tools.
- Don't drink alcohol or use unapproved drugs.
- Don't make any important personal or business decisions, or sign important papers.
- Follow your doctor's advice about activity. Be careful when you sit or stand up after being in bed for a long time. You may become dizzy if you sit or stand too quickly.

Food and Liquids:

For the rest of today, start slowly by drinking clear liquids such as water, apple juice, and soft drinks. If you feel okay, then try soup, soda crackers, and other foods that are easy to digest. Avoid spicy or fatty foods. Be sure to drink several glasses of clear liquids to avoid dehydration. Tomorrow, you can eat as you wish.

Spinal or Epidural Anesthesia

These types of anesthesia are given through a small needle placed into the lower back. There may be some back soreness, partly due to the needle and partly due to stretching of ligaments from relaxed muscles. This should fade over the next few days. Ask your surgeon what you can take for pain relief. If the pain doesn't go away, or if a chronic headache begins, please call the paging operator at **(608) 262-0486** and ask for the anesthesiologist on call.

Your anesthesiologist was Dr. _____.

Nerve Block Anesthesia

If you have had a nerve block in your arm, we will sometimes let you go home before the numbness has fully gone away. You **must** agree to protect your arm and hand from injury or extreme heat or cold. Do not put your arm where prolonged pressure could injure it. Take special care to protect your elbow and fingers! Do not smoke while numbness is present.

When to Call Your Doctor

Your surgeon is Dr. _____ from the _____ clinic. The clinic phone number is: **608-**_____. Call if you have questions or concerns. If you live outside the area, call our toll-free number **1-800-323-8942 (24 hr)**.

Call if you have:

- A fever above 100°F (by mouth) or 99° F (under the arm) for 2 readings taken 4 hours apart.
- Trouble breathing or a “wet sounding” cough that persists.
- Frequent vomiting **after** getting settled at home (more than twice).
- Trouble urinating by late tonight (or have a painful, full bladder).

After hours, weekends, and holidays: Call **608-262-0486** (Paging Operator). Ask for the doctor on call for Dr. _____. Give the operator your name and phone number with the area code. The doctor will call you back.

In an Emergency, Call 911

The staff at the Outpatient Surgery Center will try to call you at home or work within the next few days. We will ask you a few questions about your recovery and the care you received. Let us know if this is not possible or may be a problem.

We wish you a quick recovery.

The Spanish version of this *Health Facts for You* is #6373.