

# Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS)

## What is enhanced recovery after surgery?

Enhanced recovery after surgery is a program to improve the experience of patients who need major surgery. It helps patients recover sooner so life can return to normal. The ERAS program focuses on including patients in getting ready for surgery and recovery.



There are four main stages:

### 1. **Planning and preparing before surgery**

We want you to feel ready for surgery and recovery.

- Be as active as you can before surgery to increase your stamina.
- Eat plenty of healthy foods.
- Stop smoking if you can. If not, cut down as much as possible.
- If you have diabetes, work with your primary care doctor to get your blood sugars under good control. This helps prevent problems after surgery, like poor wound healing and infections.
- Prepare your home by making some meals ahead of time. Put clean sheets on your bed. Arrange for someone to help you for at least 24 hours.

### 2. **Reducing the physical stress of the operation**

You should drink clear liquids up to 2 hours before your surgery. You may be given a carbohydrate drink to take 3 hours before your surgery.

### 3. **A pain relief plan**

You will have a plan that includes medicine for pain relief. You will be encouraged to use heat, ice, music, imagery or different positions to manage pain during and after surgery. Unless you have allergies or your surgeon says you shouldn't, you should alternate doses of Tylenol (acetaminophen) and Advil (ibuprofen) for the first 72 hours after surgery. If this, along with heat and ice does not control your pain enough to be up moving around and taking deep breaths, you can use the opioid medicine that was prescribed for you.

This is an example of how to switch your medicines, if you start at 12pm:

12:00 PM	Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 650 mg (2 pills of 325 mg)
3:00 PM	Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) 600 mg (3 pills of 200 mg)
6:00 PM	Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 650 mg (2 pills of 325 mg)
9:00 PM	Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) 600 mg (3 pills of 200 mg)
<b>Continue switching every 3 hours for 3 days, until no longer needed.</b>	

#### 4. Eating and moving around after surgery

You will be encouraged to eat, drink and walk around as soon as you can. This helps your bowels get back to normal and prevents blood clots.

It is important for you to be involved in your recovery and to follow these guidelines. By working together, we can achieve the best possible outcome for you after your surgery.

# Carbohydrate Loading Before Surgery

## What is carbohydrate loading?

Carbohydrate is a source of energy. “Loading” means making sure your body has carbohydrates. Drinking carbohydrates the day of surgery can help provide energy for healing and improve recovery. Please note, this is not for everyone. Your doctor will let you know.

## Why is carbohydrate loading important before surgery?

- Your body needs energy for healing after surgery. If your body cannot get enough energy from carbohydrates, some of the protein in your muscles may start to break down. This can make you feel tired and weak. This can also delay how fast your incision heals.
- Carbohydrate helps control blood sugar levels. This is important even if you do not have diabetes.
- Carbohydrate loading may also help prevent nausea and vomiting following surgery.

## What carbohydrate will I use for loading to prepare for my surgery?

Your surgeon will give you the carbohydrate drink to take home.

## Instructions for the day of surgery

- About 3 hours before your scheduled surgery time, drink the carbohydrate drink.
- Be sure to finish this drink 3 hours before your scheduled surgery time. This will make sure your body has time to digest the drink before your surgery.

# Learning About my Surgery

Below are some questions that will help you better understand your surgery and recovery. Talk about these questions with your surgeon and healthcare team before your surgery so you can best prepare for your recovery.

What surgery am I having?

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What goals does my doctor have for this surgery?

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What goals do I have after surgery?

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How many days will I be in the hospital? \_\_\_\_\_

How long will it be before I can return to my normal activities (work, hobbies, driving)?

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What can I do to help with my recovery (weight loss, exercise, quit smoking)?

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What other questions do I have before surgery?

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