

Cardiac and Thoracic Surgery

Enhanced Recovery Program

Enhanced recovery is an advanced surgical approach that focuses on every part of your upcoming surgery to improve your recovery afterwards.

The goals of ERP include:

- Staying hydrated and eating healthy food to help your body get better faster
- Decreasing your risk of infection following surgery
- Reducing your risk of problems related to existing medical issues
- Minimizing pain and helping you manage it

Preparing Your Body for Surgery

Day Before Surgery DO NOT

- Use non-prescribed drugs or substances
- Drink beer, wine, or liquor
- Eat solid food after midnight
- Smoke or use smokeless tobacco

Day Before Surgery DO

- *Pre-Operative Protocol for CHG Bathing*

Day of Surgery

- You may brush your teeth the morning of surgery
- Take your medications as directed by the pre-surgery appointment or your surgeon

Diet Instructions:

- Do not eat any solid foods after midnight on the night before your surgery
- Drink **ONLY** clear liquids after midnight on the day of your surgery and up until 2 hours before your arrival to the hospital.

Clear Liquids

ALLOWED:

- Gatorade or Powerade (clear/yellow color)
- Jell-O (clear/yellow color)
- Apple, cranberry, and grape juice
- Italian ice
- Popsicles (clear/yellow color)
- Ginger Ale, Sprite, Sierra Mist, or 7UP
- Black coffee
- Plain broth
- Tea

ALLOWED FOR PATIENTS WITH DIABETES:

- Gatorade G2 or Powerade Zero (low sugar, clear/yellow color)
- Apple and grape juice
- Sugar-free Jell-O (clear/yellow color)
- Sugar free fruit flavored popsicles (clear/yellow color)
- Diet ginger ale, Diet Sprite, Diet Sierra Mist, or Diet 7UP
- Plain broth
- Black coffee

NOT ALLOWED:

- Milk or dairy products (including in coffee or tea)
- Citrus juices (orange, pineapple, grapefruit etc.)
- Prune Juice
- Juices with pulp

Important Note

- To reduce surgical stress on your recovery, it is recommended that you “carbohydrate load.” Carbohydrate loading involves drinking high-carbohydrate clear liquids such as Gatorade/ Powerade or apple and grape juices.
- If you have diabetes, carbohydrate loading IS NOT recommended, as it can cause high blood sugar before surgery. See the list above for suggested items to drink in limited amounts the day before your surgery.

Things to Bring to the Hospital for After Your Surgery

- Loose, comfortable clothes (t-shirts, sweatpants, pajamas, etc.)
- Toothbrush, toothpaste, soap/shampoo, shaving supplies, glasses, dentures, hearing aide, CPAP device
- Books, magazines, tablets/iPads, computer, cell phone and chargers

Pain Control

Although our goal is to keep you as comfortable as possible, there will be some discomfort for several days after your surgery. Your pain control plan may include some or all of the following:

- Medication taken the morning of surgery before you go to the operating room
- A pain block (a single injection lasting 24 hours)
- Scheduled NSAIDS and acetaminophen taken in the Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit (CVICU) or Post- Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) and in your hospital room to keep you as comfortable as possible

**Narcotic pain medication is available, but limiting narcotic use will help decrease the negative effects (such as nausea, vomiting, drowsiness, itching and constipation) on your recovery. The care team’s goal is to decrease pain and avoid complications.

Movement

Controlling your pain helps you move and walk as soon as possible after surgery. Moving is important to your recovery because it helps prevent blood clots, reduces the chances of infection, and helps your bowel function return.

Diet and Bowel Function

- Restarting a regular diet early is part of the ERP pathway and greatly helps with the healing process. You may start with clear liquids on the day of surgery, then you will change back to a regular diet. If you have diabetes, a carbohydrate-controlled/ diabetic diet is highly encouraged, as tolerated, the day after surgery. Getting enough protein and fluids after surgery is needed to improve healing and recovery.
- We encourage you to drink nutritional supplements (such as Boost, Ensure, or Glucerna if you have diabetes) 3 times a day for at least 2 weeks after surgery or until your appetite returns.
- We also encourage chewing sugar-free gum after surgery because it can quicken recovery of bowel function.