# Enhanced Recovery after Intestinal Surgery

## A Patient Guide to

Please use this guide to help you know how to prepare for your surgery and what to expect on the day of surgery.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>1 DAY BEFORE SURGERY</strong></th>
<th><strong>DAY OF SURGERY</strong></th>
<th><strong>1 DAY AFTER SURGERY</strong></th>
<th><strong>2 DAYS AFTER SURGERY</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diet:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Diet:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Diet:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You may eat a normal breakfast.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chew gum for 60 minutes, 3 times per day.</td>
<td>Eat solid foods and continue to drink liquids plus protein drinks. Continue to chew gum for 60 minutes, 3 times per day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the rest of the day, only drink clear fluids: water, Jello, juice without pulp, Popsicles, clear broth, Gatorade, tea, or coffee. No milk or milk products.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Drink liquids. Once this goes well, you will be given solid foods with 3 protein drinks to have during the day.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink (1) 12-ounce bottle of Gatorade at bedtime.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Preparation:

- Take your bowel prep and oral antibiotic as prescribed by your surgeon.
- Take a shower with chlorhexidine the night before your surgery as directed.

### After surgery:

You will be transferred to recovery, and then your hospital room. You will be instructed on the benefits of early ambulation, sequential compression devices (SCDs), your incentive spirometer to aid with deep breathing, and pain management. Tell your nurse if your pain reaches 4 out of 10 on the pain scale.

We consider pain well-managed when mild at rest (less than 4 out of 10) and moderate with movement.

Staff will assist you with walking twice in the halls. To prevent blood clots, it is important to wear the SCDs whenever you are not up walking. SCDs use plastic sleeves wrapped around your legs. The sleeves are connected to a pump that gently inflates and deflates the sleeves to improve blood flow in your legs. You will also be started on a blood thinner (usually in a shot form), as determined by your physician, to decrease your risk of developing a blood clot.

Going home after 2 days in the hospital is normal for most people having intestinal surgery. Some people will be ready for discharge sooner and, occasionally, some people need to stay in the hospital longer.

### Going Home:

The nurse will review your written discharge instructions (including pain medication and follow-up appointment) prior to leaving the hospital.

### Activity:

- Perform deep breathing and coughing exercises.
- Use incentive spirometer every hour while awake.
- Sit in a chair for all meals for at least six hours per day total.
- With assistance, get up and walk length of the hallway 6 times per day. This is in addition to bathroom use.

### Comfort and Pain Control:

- **If you had an epidural,** the tiny tube in your back will be removed.
- Tell your nurse if your pain reaches 4 out of 10 on the pain scale.

### Diet:

- Chew gum for 60 minutes, 3 times per day.
- Drink liquids. Once this goes well, you will be given solid foods with 3 protein drinks to have during the day.

### Diet:

- Eat solid foods and continue to drink liquids plus protein drinks. Continue to chew gum for 60 minutes, 3 times per day.

### Diet:

- Eat a normal breakfast.
- For the rest of the day, only drink clear fluids: water, Jello, juice without pulp, Popsicles, clear broth, Gatorade, tea, or coffee. No milk or milk products.
- Drink (1) 12-ounce bottle of Gatorade at bedtime.

### Activity:

- Perform deep breathing and coughing exercises.
- Use incentive spirometer every hour while awake.
- Sit in a chair for all meals for at least six hours per day total.
- With assistance, get up and walk length of the hallway 6 times per day. This is in addition to bathroom use.

### Comfort and Pain Control:

- **If you had an epidural,** the tiny tube in your back will be removed.
- Tell your nurse if your pain reaches 4 out of 10 on the pain scale.

### Going Home:

The nurse will review your written discharge instructions (including pain medication and follow-up appointment) prior to leaving the hospital.
Exercise will help ensure your body is as fit as possible before your surgery. If you are already exercising, keep up the good work. If you are not, start slowly adding exercise into your day.

- Exercise does not need to be strenuous to be helpful. In fact, a fifteen-minute walk is far better than not exercising at all.

We strongly suggest you stop smoking completely at least two weeks before your surgery to reduce the risk of lung complications. Doctors can help you stop smoking by prescribing certain medications.

Avoid excessive alcohol use before surgery. Alcohol can interact with some medications. Please let us know if you need help decreasing your alcohol use.

Pre-operational preparation

- **Required testing** is determined by your medical history. You will receive instructions after your interview.
- **Pre-operative antibiotics** will be prescribed by your surgeon.
- **Skin prep.** Take a shower with an antiseptic skin cleanser (chlorhexidine) the night before your surgery. It is often found with first aid supplies at your local store. Use the cleanser on a clean wash cloth and wash from the neck down avoiding private areas. Do not use on your head or face. Do not use if you are allergic to chlorhexidine.
- **Bowel cleansing** will be prescribed by your surgeon. Complete this as directed the day prior to surgery.
- **Diet.** The day prior to surgery you may eat a normal breakfast. For the rest of the day only drink clear fluids: water, Jello, juice without pulp, Popsicles, clear broth, Gatorade, tea or coffee without creamer. No milk or milk products. No solid food.
- **Complex carbohydrate drink.** Drink one 12 oz. bottle of Gatorade (any flavor not red in color). You should be finished drinking the Gatorade 4 hours prior to scheduled surgery time.

Pre-Surgery Checklist

This pre-surgery checklist will help you to be prepared for surgery.

- Phone interview with Pre-Admission Testing (PAT)
- Blood tests and other necessary tests
- Bowel preparation:
- Antibiotics:
- Shower with chlorhexidine the night before surgery
- Drink Gatorade (12 ounce bottle) and finish 4 hours before surgery