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patient information





Welcome to the Life Sports Science Surgical Centre. This leaflet was compiled to answer frequently asked questions by patients who need to undergo surgery or a procedure.

What is day surgery?

Day surgery is any procedure or surgery, which does not require for the patient to stay in hospital overnight afterwards. Your surgeon and anaesthesiologist will evaluate your specific medical condition and the type of surgery you will be undergoing, to determine if day surgery is an appropriate option for you. Day surgery has been proven to be safe and cost-effective, and enables you to return home quickly and complete your recovery in comfortable and familiar surroundings. It has a high satisfaction rate among patients.

Are there differences in anaesthesia given to day and overnight patients?

There are different considerations for the anaesthesiologist when administering anaesthesia to a patient who will go home after the surgery. A combination of short acting medications and different anaesthetic techniques are used to make this possible.

What types of anaesthesia are used in day surgery?

There are four types of anaesthesia commonly used – general, regional, local and monitored anaesthesia care. In very broad terms, the differences are as follows:

General anaesthesia affects your whole body. It is either given intravenously or as an inhaled gas, making you dizzy or drowsy and causing you to lose consciousness. While under general anaesthesia, you may be given oxygen. This is done by either placing a mask over your nose or by means of a small tube, which is inserted into your lungs through your mouth. Regional anaesthesia only numbs a specific part of your body. You can choose to remain awake during the procedure, or be sedated. Local anaesthesia affects only the location of surgery. It is usually injected, but is sometimes applied by means of an ointment, cream or spray. You can choose to remain awake or be sedated for this as well. Monitored anaesthesia care involves medications given to make you drowsy and to relieve pain.

What about eating and drinking?

You should not eat or drink anything before your surgery. Your anaesthesiologist will give you instructions on how long you need to fast before your surgery. You should also refrain from smoking. Some types of surgery require you to fast in order to aid in the actual surgery (stomach surgery, for example) or to reduce the chances of infection. Anaesthesia is a risk when it is given to a patient with a full stomach as this can cause aspiration. Basically, aspiration occurs when stomach contents are pushed up into the oesophagus and end up in the lungs. This can lead to serious pneumonia and can be life threatening. After the

surgery, you will be given sips of clear liquids for a start, and will be allowed to eat a light meal when you are able.

Do I need someone to take me home?

The effects of the medications used in anaesthesia may last up to 24 hours before they fully disappear, and it is therefore unsafe to drive yourself home. You may also need someone to stay with you at home during the first 24 hours after surgery, to assist with your care. This is for your own safety – patients often feel awake and normal while they are actually still under the effects of anaesthesia. You may believe that you can undertake all your normal activities, but this is not true! Be safe!

What about medications?

You need to consult with your doctors on which of your regular medications you should and should not take prior to surgery. After your surgery, you will receive instructions about when to resume your usual medication regimen. Additional medications, such as pain killers or antibiotics may also be prescribed for you to take after the surgery.

Will I feel sick and experience other side effects after surgery?

It is possible that you may experience some nausea and vomiting. This is usually not serious and can be treated with medication. You may have a sore throat if you received general anaesthesia and a breathing tube was inserted. This is not dangerous or life threatening and should resolve on its own in a few days. It is natural to experience soreness or some pain from surgery, and you should inform your medical care team so that you can receive medications for pain control. However, there is no reason for you to be in severe pain.

When will I be able to go home?

You will need to meet a certain set of criteria before you are discharged. This is to ensure that you are able to take care of your own basic needs once you leave the surgical centre and return home. You will, for example, need to be able to stand, walk, go to the bathroom, eat and drink without becoming nauseous. The time it takes to meet these criteria varies from patient to patient, but usually ranges from one hour to several hours after surgery. It is rarely necessary for a patient to stay overnight and arrangements will be made for this, should the need arise.

We wish you a speedy recovery.