

Having a general anaesthetic - instructions to follow before and after your operation

Community Hospitals

Information for Patients

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Introduction

You are going to have general anaesthetic (GA) during your operation. You have agreed to this. It is important that you follow the instructions in this leaflet. It is to prepare you for your operation and gives you instructions for after your operation.

What is a general anaesthetic?

General anaesthesia is when we give you medicine that makes you fall asleep (unconscious). We do this so you do not move or feel anything during the operation. Anaesthetic is given as a liquid injected into your vein. Normally this is in the back of your hand through a thin plastic tube (cannula). It will be given to you by a specially trained doctor called an anaesthetist. They are responsible for your wellbeing and safety during your operation.

Eating and drinking instructions before your operation

It is important that you **do not eat or drink** for some time before your operation and GA to avoid complications. This is similar to fasting. If there is food or liquid in your stomach during the anaesthetic, it could come up to the back of your throat and go down into your lungs. This would cause damage to you.

Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

How should I fast?

You will need to fast differently for when your operation is. Follow the instructions below for when you operation is.

For a morning operation

Eating: You must have **nothing** to eat after midnight the night before your operation. This includes sweets and chewing gum.

Drinking: You may drink **water only until 7am**. **Do not** drink anything else after this time.

For an afternoon operation

Eating: You can have a light breakfast like 1 slice of toast or cereal with tea or coffee **before 7.30am**. **Do not** eat anything after this time, including sweets and chewing gum.

Drinking: You may drink **water only until 11am**. **Do not** drink anything else after this time.

We will cancel your operation if you eat and drink after these times.

Medication

You should take your normal prescribed medication **before 7am** on the morning of your operation. Do not take medication you have been told not to at your pre-assessment appointment.

What you need to do before your operation

- Please have a bath or shower on the morning of your operation. This will clean your skin and reduce the risk of infection.
- **Do not** smoke or drink alcohol for 24 hours before your operation.
- **Do not** wear contact lenses.
- **Do not** wear jewellery except for a plain wedding band only.
- **Do not** wear makeup on the day of your operation.
- **Do not** wear nail polish or acrylic nails. We will monitor your oxygen levels during the operation. A probe will be placed on your finger for this. Nail polish and acrylic nails can interfere with this.
- Please have a supply of paracetamol and ibuprofen at home unless you are unable to take these for any reason.
- Please have a responsible adult to collect you from the Day Surgery Unit after your operation. **You must also arrange to have a responsible adult stay with you for 24 hours after your operation.**
- Please bring a dressing gown and slippers (if you have them).

What to do if you cannot attend

If you cannot attend your operation or feel/are unwell (such as a cough, cold, high temperature or sickness and diarrhoea), you must call the Day Surgery Unit staff to let them know. You can use the phone numbers end of this leaflet.

Coming to hospital

You should come to reception on the Day Surgery Unit. Come at the time written in your admission letter. Your nurse will collect you, take you through to the Unit. They will let you know what time your operation will be. They will be able to answer any concerns or questions you may have.

What do I need to bring with me?

- Admission letter.
- You may wish to bring something to read to pass the time.
- You can bring a mobile phone but please keep it on silent. You do not use it to take any photographs when at the Day Surgery Unit.
- **Do not** bring any valuables.

After your operation

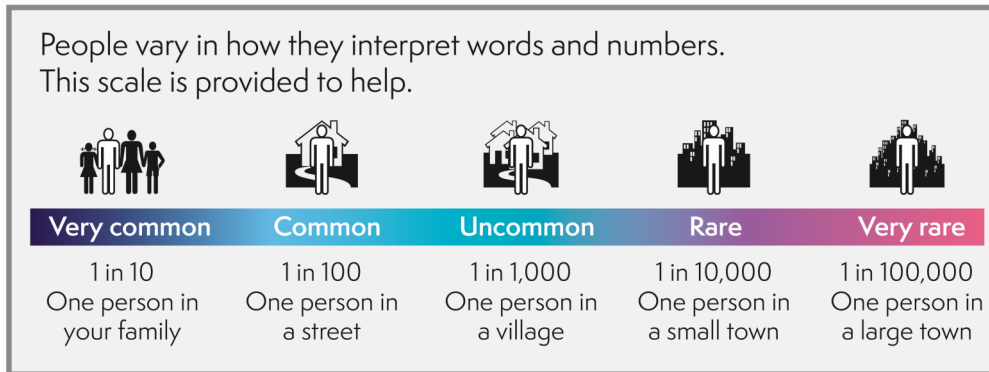
At the end of your operation you will begin to wake up. We will give you oxygen through a face mask over your nose and mouth. This will be for a short while.

You can get some common side effects after your anaesthetic like sickness, feeling cold/shivering or feeling confused. Your nurse will recognise these side effects and look after you.

You will stay on the Day Surgery Unit until the nurses are sure that you have fully recovered. This is usually about 1 to 3 hours after your operation.

Understanding risks, side effects and complications

This scale helps to understand the chances of risk in the following pages:



In modern anaesthesia, serious problems are uncommon.

We cannot remove risk completely. But modern equipment, training and drugs have made it a much safer procedure in recent years.

A risk depends on how likely it is to happen, how serious it could be and how it can be treated. The risk that you have will depend on if you have other illness. Or personal factors like smoking or being overweight.

Your anaesthetist will be able to answer any questions you may have.

Here are some very common side effects which can happen with general anaesthetic:

- Feeling sick and vomiting after surgery
- Feeling cold/shivering
- Sore throat
- Dizziness, blurred vision
- Headache
- Damage to the lips or tongue (usually minor)
- Itching
- Aches, pains and backache
- Confusion or memory loss

The following are uncommon side effects and complications:

- Chest infection
- Damage to teeth
- An existing medical condition getting worse
- Awareness (becoming conscious during your operation)

Information on rare or very rare side effects and complications not listed here can be found in the 'Where can I get more information?' section on page 6.

What if there are complications during or after my operation?

We will monitor you in theatre during your operation and after your operation. It is uncommon for there to be any complications. But if there are any concerns and you are not well enough to go home after your operation, the doctors and nurses will arrange a transfer to a main hospital nearby. We will make sure you are monitored and cared for in the right place which have overnight facilities.

Safety advice following a general anaesthetic

General anaesthetics can affect your memory, concentration and reflexes for 24 to 48 hours after your operation. Please rest at home for at least 24 hours after your GA. Do not go to work or school the day after your operation. It is important that you follow these instructions:

- You **must** have a responsible adult to take you home and to stay with you for the first 24 hours.
- **Do not** drive any vehicle including a bicycle for at least 24 hours.
- **Do not** operate any machinery or appliances that may cause harm or injury.
- **Do not** make important decisions or sign legal documents.
- **Do not** drink alcohol.
- **Do not** smoke.
- **Do not** take sleeping tablets.

Contact details

The Day Surgery Units are open **Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm** (not bank holidays).

Melton Mowbray Hospital Day Surgery Unit: 01664 854 904

Loughborough Hospital Day Surgery Unit: 01509 564 406

Where can I get more information?

- More information on side effects and complications:
<https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/document-store/anaesthesia-explained>
- <https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/patientinfo>

This publication includes information taken from the Royal College of Anaesthetists' (RCoA) patient information risk leaflet series but the RCoA has not reviewed this as a whole.

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على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
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