

Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS)

Enhanced recovery after surgery (ERAS) is an evidence-based approach to care before, during, and after surgery. ERAS plans have been proven to help patients recover faster and with fewer complications.

Research shows that certain measures can be taken to speed up the recovery process for individuals undergoing congenital heart surgery. This approach to patient care is known as enhanced recovery after surgery (ERAS). Below are guidelines that can help optimize the recovery process so that patients can get back to the things they enjoy most.

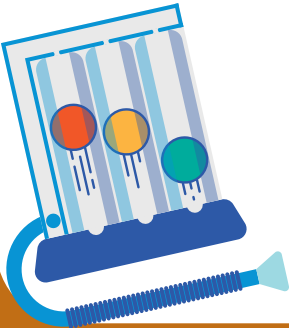
During the Weeks Leading Up to Surgery



- Eat a healthy diet* that includes:
 - Protein-rich foods (e.g., lean meats, fish, beans, dairy products, protein drinks)
 - Fruit (e.g., citrus fruits, tomatoes)
 - Vegetables (e.g., leafy greens, sweet potatoes, peas, string beans)
 - Whole grains (e.g., brown rice, oatmeal, quinoa, whole wheat pasta)
- Avoid:
 - Fried, greasy foods (e.g., fried chicken, French fries, doughnuts)
 - High-calorie foods (e.g., cakes, cookies, waffles)
 - High-fat foods (e.g., pizza, ice cream, foods with cream sauce)
- Drink at least 6-8 glasses of fluids each day
- Stay active (continue any regular exercise or begin walking short distances as tolerated)

* If you are already on a specific diet for medical reasons, do not modify your diet for surgery.

During the Days Leading Up to Surgery*



- Eat light, healthy meals (e.g., fruit, juices, non-starchy vegetables)
- Avoid heavy and fatty foods (e.g., fried foods, foods with heavy cream, fatty meats)
- Drink at least 6-8 glasses of fluids each day
- Stay active (as tolerated)
- Use the antibacterial wipes and ointment as prescribed (if appropriate)
- Practice using your incentive spirometer at least 10 times a day

* If you have a bowel regimen that you use to treat constipation (e.g., fruit juices, Colace, MiraLAX), begin it 3 days before surgery.

The Day of Surgery



- **Adults** should drink 24-36 ounces of a clear carbohydrate drink (e.g., Pedialyte, apple juice, white grape juice, Gatorade) at bedtime and 2 hours before surgery.
- **Children** should drink a regular serving size (6-18 ounces) of a clear carbohydrate drink (e.g., Pedialyte, apple juice, white grape juice, Gatorade) at bedtime and 2 hours before surgery.

After Surgery

- Begin drinking sips of clear liquids as soon as you are awake enough to drink safely and advance to a regular diet as you can.
- Take 10 breaths with your incentive spirometer every hour you are awake.
- Patients with breast tissue may feel more comfortable wearing a soft, gentle binder to provide support and prevent the weight of the breast tissue from pulling on the chest. If you have a support device that closes in front, this is usually easier to put on and take off. Be sure to bring this to the hospital with you, as you will want to wear it as soon as it is safe to walk after surgery.
- Your care team will help get out of bed and into a chair as soon as possible. You should try to spend at least 50% of your awake time sitting up in a chair rather than lying in bed.
- Your care team will help you walk as soon as is safe after surgery and work to increase the distance 3-4 times per day.



- Control your nausea and pain (ask for medicine if needed; medicine for pain should be requested when the pain is a 5 or 6 out of 10 rather than a 10 out of 10, so you can try medicines without narcotics first).
- Stay active (as tolerated), keep busy (e.g., listen to music, watch movies, play games), practice mindfulness (e.g., meditation, muscles relaxation, journaling, expressing gratitude), and focus on the positive.
- After surgery, you will be given a medication to help make your bowel movements softer and easier, please let us know when you are having daily bowel movements or if you are still unable to have one after two days and we can adjust the medication.

When You Return Home

- Eat a healthy diet that includes:
 - Protein-rich foods
 - Fruit
 - Vegetables
 - Whole grains
- Stay active (gradually progressing until you are back to pre-surgical activities), keep busy, practice mindfulness, and focus on the positive
- Take 10 breaths with your incentive spirometer every hour you are awake
- Treat your pain with acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol) and Ibuprofen (e.g., Advil, Motrin), as approved by your doctor, and only use narcotics when pain does not respond to these medicines
- Be sure to return for follow-up appointments with all of your providers and let them know if you are not continuing to make progress at home

