



Patient & Family Guide
2015

After My Operation



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After My Operation

This pamphlet will answer some of your questions about your care at home.

What did I have done?

The name of your operation is:

How will I feel?

Most people feel tired and have some soreness or pain from their operation. Some people may feel sick to their stomach and have stiff or sore muscles.

What can I do?

- Rest quietly today.
- Tomorrow, be up and about unless told otherwise by your surgeon.
- Do not drive a car or operate machinery for 24 hours.
- Do not sign any legal documents or important papers for 24 hours.
- **Do not drink alcohol.**
- You should **not** be responsible for small children or be a main caregiver.
- You should have a responsible adult stay with you overnight and for the first 24 hours after your operation, due to the anesthetic.

If you have questions or concerns related specifically to your **anesthesia care**, please call 902-473-4326. If it is after business hours, leave a confidential voice mail and your call will be returned.

When can I eat?

Follow the instructions given to you by your nurse or surgeon.

- When you are able, it is best to start with clear juices, pop, tea, clear soups, crackers, or toast. Starting tomorrow, you may eat normally.
- **Do not drink alcohol for 24 hours.**

What will I do if I have pain?

- If you did not get a prescription filled before your operation, have it filled at a drugstore on your way home.
- If you are having pain, start taking your pain pills as soon as you can.
- Be sure to read the label on the bottle and take the pills according to the directions.
- **Never drink alcohol while you are taking pain pills.**
- If you had an operation on an arm/hand or leg/foot, place it up on pillows above the level of your heart. This should help relieve the pain, aching, or throbbing.

How do I take care of my dressings?

- Keep the dressings dry.
- If dressings get wet, you may reinforce them by adding another dressing.
- You can buy sterile dressings from any drugstore.
- Do not remove your dressings for _____ days.
- If you have Steri-Strips™, they should stay on for 7-10 days.

When can I drive?

Do not drive a car for 24 hours. Be sure you are pain-free and can handle the limb or area comfortably. Follow the instructions given to you by your surgeon.

Please note: prescription pain medications can cause drowsiness and you should not drive while taking these.

When can I return to work?

Talk about returning to work with your surgeon.

What if I have diagnosed sleep apnea?

For **ALL** sleep apnea patients:

- Sleep in a semi-upright position or on your side for the first 24 hours after your operation. Don't sleep lying flat on your back.
- Use only medications prescribed to you by your doctor.
- **Do not drink alcohol.**
- Use your dental device for sleep if you used it before surgery.
- If your pain gets worse and you are using more prescribed pain medication, contact your doctor or go to the Emergency Department.

For patients who use CPAP machines:

- Use your CPAP machine whenever you are sleeping.
- Use your CPAP machine when you are resting or napping during the day while taking pain medication.

When do I call the doctor?

If you have bleeding:

- Place your hand over the dressing and press firmly.
- Place the affected part up on pillows above the level of your heart, if possible.
- Rest quietly until the bleeding stops.

Contact your doctor if the bleeding continues.

In case of severe bleeding, go to the Emergency Department immediately.

Call your doctor as soon as possible, if you have any of these signs of infection:

- › Fever
- › Chills
- › Increased swelling, redness, or warmth around the wound
- › Increased drainage from the wound
- › Bad smell from the wound
- › Pain that is not helped by the pain pills you are taking

You may contact your surgeon:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

If your surgeon is not available:

Call your family doctor

OR Go to your local Emergency Department

OR Speak with the Resident on call after hours.
Call QEII Locating at 902-473-2222 and ask for
the _____ Resident to be paged
for you to speak to.

Follow-up care

Return appointment: Yes No

(Call your surgeon/family doctor for instructions.
Within 2-3 days you should be notified by the
clinic of your appointment time, if needed.)

Your next medication is due at:

_____ a.m. p.m.

Special instructions:

Notes:

Looking for more health information?

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.
For more information go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

*Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.
Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!*

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.