

Pre and Post Operative Instructions

Pre-Op Diet

Your pre-operative diet will consist of either the:

1. Standard Preparation, or
2. Special Pre-Operative Bowel Preparation

You should follow the **Standard Preparation**, outlined below, unless otherwise instructed. It is important to note that if you do not adhere to this diet your surgery cannot proceed.

1. STANDARD PREPARATION FOR SURGERY REQUIRING ANAESTHESIA

You may be given pre-operative instructions for fasting by your Anaesthetist or the hospital.

If so, these instructions are to take priority over all others. If you do not receive any instructions, please following the standard fasting advice outlined here:

If you are having **morning** surgery: Have **nothing to eat or drink from midnight** on the day of surgery, except clear fluids (e.g. water, Gatorade) are allowed until 2 hours prior to your hospital admission time.

If you are having **afternoon** surgery: Have **nothing to eat or drink after 6.30am on the day of surgery**, except for clear fluids (e.g. water, Gatorade) which are allowed until 2 hours prior to your hospital admission time.

Our practice staff and booking paperwork will advise you if you are having morning or afternoon surgery.

2. SPECIAL PRE OPERATIVE BOWEL PREPARATION *(you will be advised if this is required)*

Certain procedures require an empty bowel. This is in the form of a diet and special instructions you will need to follow for two days prior to your surgery.

If this applies to your procedure, you will be informed by our practice staff and booking paperwork and will receive a separate instruction sheet.

Pre-Op Covid/Viral Symptoms

If you have Covid or flu-like symptoms including cough, fever, nasal congestion and muscle aches, your procedure may not be able to go ahead. Please do a RAT test or PCR and call both Alana Healthcare to notify as well as your Anaesthetist (if you have their details). Following Covid infection you may need to wait 4-8 weeks after recovering before you can have your surgery. This is due to increased anaesthetic risks for people who have recently had Covid. Your Alana Doctor and Anaesthetist will advise you of the required time that your procedure will need to be postponed.

Pre-Op Medication

Hormones:	Are to be continued
Pain medications:	Paracetamol only (no codeine) Stop Aspirin 14 days prior to surgery unless otherwise advised by your doctor Ibuprofen (Nurofen), Ponstan, Voltaren and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs can be continued until surgery
Other medications:	Continue other medications (heart, diabetes) by taking with a small amount of water on the morning of your surgery - if you are unsure, check with your Alana Doctor.

Pre-Op Exercise

There is no restriction of daily activities before your surgery.

In Hospital

Arrive at the hospital at the time specified. Once the admission process is complete, nursing staff will orientate you to the ward and room in which you will be staying.

TED Anti Embolism stockings may be fitted. If so, they are to be worn for 10 days post-operatively, especially when you are in bed or resting on the couch.

Your Alana Doctor and your Anaesthetist will see you prior to surgery. You should take this time to advise of any health problems you have had as some may interfere with your surgery. You should also provide a list of current medications.

Post-Op Diet

Day of Surgery: An intravenous drip will give you all the fluids you require.
After Surgery: Gradually increase your fluid intake, i.e. water > clear fluids > full fluids / milk products.
The intravenous drip will be discontinued if managing adequate fluids.
Light diet (soup, sandwiches) if desired.
Gradually build up to normal diet.
Small frequent meals rather than occasional large ones.

Post-Op Medication

Pain medication: Will be provided via intravenous drip or injection initially. As requirement falls this will be changed to suppositories or tablets. Pain after laparoscopy may be referred to the shoulders and this is normal and should only last for 1-2 days. Lying flat can help with this pain if needed. Take home pain medication will be prescribed

Nausea medication: Medication for nausea is given at the time of surgery. Further can be given if required

Benefibre: May be added to enhance the fibre in your diet. It is available without prescription and contains trace amounts of gluten only

Coloxyl with Senna: Will be given in hospital as most pain killers stronger than paracetamol and voltaren will create constipation. You should continue taking this at home if required for constipation, or if any codeine is being taken post-operatively at home. It is available without prescription
A high fibre diet with plenty of fluid should prevent the need for the use of a laxative. Constipation and straining should be avoided at all times. If you do become constipated please contact Alana Healthcare on 9009 5255

Hormones: Advice will be given regarding continuing hormonal treatment

Other medications: Restart other medications (heart, diabetes) on day of surgery.

Post-Op Exercise

Day of Surgery: Do not cross legs in bed
Wiggle feet and legs when in bed, begin as soon as possible and continue

After Surgery: Sit on side of bed initially
Transfer to bedside chair
Walk to bathroom
Walk freely around the ward
Progress should be gradual with no exertion
No heavy exercise for 10 days to avoid the risk of bruising or bleeding. You should walk every day after surgery, increasing the duration each day.

Post-Op Wound Care

Your wounds will be covered with plastic dressings or clear plastic “glue” dressing. You can shower with these dressings and pat them dry with a towel or use a hair dryer. The dressings should be removed after 7 days, including the adhesive strips (steristrips). You should wash the wounds with warm water to keep them clean and pat them dry with a towel. Do not use alcohol solutions or betadine or other antiseptics on the wounds unless instructed.

It is normal for the wounds to be mildly red and/or raised, although the presence of pus, an enlarging area of redness or increasing pain should be reported to your Alana doctor. You may often feel a pea sized lump under laparoscopy wounds and a ridge under a laparotomy wound. This is quite normal and is caused by hardening of the tissues from surgery. It may take 3-6 months for this to resolve completely. The area around the wounds may be numb or have decreased sensation. This is due to nerves being cut or damaged during the surgical procedure. The sensation will usually return within 2 weeks around laparoscopy scars but may take several months following a laparotomy. On rare occasions, some numbness may persist for life.

General Advice

The following is general advice for a range of surgical procedures. Certain instructions may not apply to your individual case. Please check with your Alana Doctor for clarification of any of the following.

Following Surgery:

- Short baths can be taken (10-15 minutes) when there is no vaginal bleeding
- Showers may be taken as soon as you are able to walk around
- Wounds may get wet but should be dried thoroughly, pat dry with towel or use a hair dryer if necessary
- Leave Steristrips on wounds for 7 days
- Re-start exercise gradually and build up (walking, swimming, jogging), no exertion, avoid high impact exercises for 6 weeks (3 months for pelvic floor surgery) and **stop if it hurts**; See information above on Exercise after surgery
- Sexual intercourse can resume when vaginal bleeding / discharge stops (approximately 4-6 weeks for hysterectomy)
- After major surgery avoid heavy lifting for 3 months (i.e. no more than 10 kg)
- Avoid standing for long periods
- Recommence driving when pain medication is no longer required (check with your car insurance company regarding cover following surgery)
- Recovery from major surgery is dependant on the individual and may take from 4 weeks to several months

Post-operative Visits:

- First Visit - 2-6 weeks (an appointment will be made for you at the time of booking your surgery)
- Second Visit - Determined by your Alana Doctor, usually between 3-6 months post-op

Return to Work

If you have had a minor day-only procedure (e.g. hysteroscopy) you will likely only require 1-2 days off work. If you have had a laparoscopic surgery you should be able to return to a desk job 1-2 weeks after surgery. If you have had major surgery including hysterectomy, laparotomy (open procedures requiring a larger incision), or if you have a heavy manual job or jobs that involve lifting, you will likely require 3-4 weeks recovery. Light duties **may** be possible during this time.

You are likely to feel more tired than usual following surgery and rest is recommended. This is because your body is putting energy into healing the surgical areas. It is recommended you “listen” to your body and do not push excessively. Avoidance of alcohol, keeping well hydrated and a healthy diet is recommended for optimal healing.

Contacts

Alana Healthcare	9009 5255 or reception@alanahealthcare.com.au
Prince of Wales Private Hospital	9650 4000 (switchboard)
Royal Hospital for Women	9382 6111 (switchboard)