

Hardware Removal

Patient & Family Information

People may have “hardware” (pins, plates, screws) that was needed at the time of surgery, but later may be removed. This pamphlet will give you guidelines to follow after this surgery. Please ask your doctor or nurse any questions you may have.

Wound and Dressing:

You may have a large, bulky dressing that applies gentle pressure to your wound.

You may have scant to moderate bright red drainage. If this becomes a large amount of bleeding, put pressure on the area and go to the emergency at the hospital where you had your surgery.

Your wound has been closed with paper tapes (steri-strips), staples or sutures. The tapes should come off on their own, in about a week. After a week, remove the ones left by pulling the tapes towards the middle of the incision. Sutures or staples will be removed at your follow-up visit.

Pain:

You can expect to have moderate pain for 24 to 48 hours. Ask the nurse for medications for this. At home take medication your doctor has suggested.

It is also common after a general anaesthetic to have muscle soreness. This will slowly go away as you move around.

Diet:

It is common to have an upset stomach after surgery. Ask the nurse for medication for this.

Drink extra fluids and begin by eating soft foods such as soups, puddings and ice cream. Return to your normal diet as you feel hungry.

Showering or Bathing:

You may shower or bath the day after your surgery, but you must keep your dressing dry. A wet dressing increases the chance of infection. You may be able to cover the dressing with a plastic bag taped in place.

Medications:

Your doctor will tell you if you need any medications. If you need antibiotics, it is important to take them until they are gone.

Activity:

You may return to normal activities as it is comfortable. You may need to use crutches.

Work:

You can return to school or work as your doctor suggests. This will be discussed when you see your doctor.

Visit Your Doctor:

Make an appointment to see your doctor in 2 to 3 weeks.

Guidelines to Follow After Having a General Anaesthetic:

The medications given to you during surgery may remain in your body for as long as 48 hours. They may change how you think and do things. Because of this for 48 hours do not:

- drive
- drink any alcohol
- decide on any legal or money matters

Phone your doctor or go to the Emergency Department where you had your surgery if:

- you have a large amount of bleeding from your wound
- you have redness, pain, swelling or discharge from your wound
- your medication is not helping your pain
- you develop fever or chills

You are a partner with us in planning your care. Ask questions, and be sure you are clear about how you will manage when you go home.

For general information or if you have any questions and you cannot contact your doctor, please phone:

**HEALTHLink Alberta
1-800-408-5465 (LINK)
Health advice 24 hours a day**