

Post Anesthesia Care Unit (Recovery Room)

After surgery you will be taken to the recovery room, also called the PACU (Post Anesthesia Care Unit). You will be watched closely and be given medicine for pain. You may have a catheter (small tube) in your bladder to drain urine. You may also have a drain near your incision. You will be moved to your hospital room when you are awake and your condition is stable. Once you are in your hospital room your family members or a friend will be able to see you.

Managing Your Pain

Pain management is an important part of your care. Good pain control helps your body rest and heal with greater comfort, and helps you feel better faster.

Unfortunately, pain is a common experience after your surgery. Many people experience pain differently and have different results from medications and other pain control methods. We take pride in the care we provide you, and want your stay to be as comfortable as possible.

To help us provide the best pain management for you we will ask you different questions about your pain and how you have handled pain in the past. We will ask you to describe what type of pain you have, where it is, and if there are any times it hurts more than others. You will be asked frequently to rate your pain on a scale of 0-10, "0" being no pain and "10" being severe pain. We recommend you request pain medication when you first become uncomfortable and/or before you are going to do something that you know will increase your pain (getting out of bed, participating in therapies etc).

The right medication and the right amount are the most important factors for your pain control. Some people will take pills by mouth, others will have injections (shots) or intravenous (IV) medications. With many of the joint replacement surgical procedures a Patient Controlled Analgesia pump (PCA) will be used. The PCA pump is programmed to allow you to administer pain medication through your IV. The amount and the interval is based upon your individual needs and treatment plan. The nursing staff will instruct you on how to use it. After your intravenous fluids are discontinued, pills will most likely be ordered for your medication.

In addition to medications, there are other pain reduction methods that may help you with your pain management. The following can help relieve your anxiety, decrease muscle tension and increase your circulation. Using some of these methods may also help you keep your mind off your discomfort.

- Relaxation Techniques
- Music
- Changing positions
- Breathing Exercises
- Humor
- Focusing on pleasant images

Remember, you have the right to ask your healthcare team to help you manage your pain. It is important for your recovery that your pain be controlled and manageable. You are the best judge of your pain and things that help you, so please let us know what we can do to help you.