



ERAS Program

Enhanced Recovery After Surgery

UPMC Central PA



Getting Ready for Surgery – Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) Program

Getting ready for surgery is like training for a marathon. You will do better if you are prepared.

Enhanced Recovery after Surgery, or ERAS, is a program to help you get ready for surgery – and to help you get better afterward.

The goals of ERAS are to:

- Make sure you are ready on the day of surgery
- Decrease the length of time you stay in the hospital
- Help you get better faster after your surgery
- Prevent complications and re-admissions



How does ERAS help me get ready for surgery?

Before your surgery

We will meet with you in the office to explain what to expect. We will talk about what will happen before, during, and after surgery. You will meet members of the surgical team, get written information to take home, and be able to ask questions. You may also have a pre-surgical visit at the Surgery Optimization Clinic.

What else will we talk about at the pre-surgery office visit?

- **Diet and healthy eating:** Your body burns a lot of energy during surgery. Healthy eating in the weeks and days before your surgery will help your body get ready. Eating well can help your body fight infection and can help your incision heal faster. You will talk about how eating more protein can help to keep your muscles strong and give you more energy. You may also talk about healthy weight management/weight loss.
- **Exercise:** Exercising in the days and weeks before your surgery can help you get stronger and can help you recover faster. If you can, you will be encouraged to walk 30 minutes a day before surgery. You may also talk about other exercises that you can do to get ready.
- **Smoking and tobacco:** Smoking can make it harder for your body to recover from surgery. If you smoke, your incision may take longer to heal. Your body might have a harder time avoiding infections. If you smoke, you will be asked to try not to smoke or use any kind of nicotine, like vaping, before your surgery. Any degree of cessation (stopping) is helpful. If you need help to stop smoking, we can refer you to a nicotine cessation counselor or other supportive services.
- **Alcohol:** Drinking alcohol, especially in excess, can affect how the anesthesia and other medicines work in your body. It can lead to complications after surgery and a longer hospital stay. Talk with us about how much alcohol you drink.
- **Nausea and Vomiting:** Many people sometimes feel sick to their stomachs after surgery. This is called “post-surgery nausea and vomiting.” We will talk about your risk for nausea and vomiting. Some people take medicine to help prevent or stop nausea and vomiting after surgery. We can talk about whether medicine before surgery might help you.
- **Other instructions:** You will get instructions about when to fast (stop eating) before your surgery. Some people may be told about a drink called Ensure® Pre-Surgery Clear Carbohydrate Drink before surgery. If you have diabetes, you may be told about a drink called Gatorade G2®.
- **Testing and screening:** To help your body prepare for surgery, you may also be tested or screened for diabetes or sleep apnea.

Ensure® Brand Pre-Surgery Clear Carbohydrate Drink

Your body burns a lot of energy during surgery. Healthy eating in the weeks and days before your surgery will help your body prepare for the best recovery.

Your surgeon has given you **3 bottles** of Ensure® Pre-Surgery Clear Carbohydrate to drink before your surgery. The drink has extra carbohydrates which can help improve your recovery after surgery. There is no charge for these drinks.

This drink can:

- Help you to feel less thirsty and hungry when you are fasting before surgery
- Help to reduce the chance of complications during and after your surgery
- Reduce nausea and vomiting after your surgery
- Help to shorten the length of your stay in the hospital
- Help you have better blood sugar control after surgery
- Help your wounds heal faster

About the drinks:

- The drinks can be kept in the refrigerator or poured over ice
- This drink is gluten-free and safe for people with lactose intolerance
- Halal
- Kosher
- **If you are diabetic, do not drink the Ensure® Pre-Surgery Clear Carbohydrate Drink. Please see “Gatorade G2® Pre-Surgery Drinks for Diabetics” section on page 4.**

A nurse will call you on the business day before your surgery. The nurse will review these instructions with you and answer any questions you have.

The night before surgery:

- Drink 1 full (10 oz.) bottle with dinner
- Drink 1 full (10 oz.) bottle before bed

The morning of surgery:

Your surgery time: _____

Finish drinking beverage by: _____

- Drink 1 full (10 oz.) bottle
- Drink the whole bottle within 5 to 10 minutes
- **It is very important that you drink the bottle more than 4 hours before your scheduled surgery time.**
 - For example, if the surgery time is 10 a.m., you should finish the drink no later than 6 a.m.

Gatorade® G2 Pre-Surgery Drink for People with Diabetes

Your body burns a lot of energy during surgery. Healthy eating in the weeks and days before your surgery will help your body prepare for the best recovery.

- You will be asked to drink **2 bottles of clear** Gatorade G2® (12 oz.) before surgery. You can find this at the grocery store.
- Gatorade G2® is lower in sugar and carbohydrates and is safe for patients with diabetes to drink before surgery.
- Avoid red colored G2.
- Do not substitute G2 with any other drink unless directed by your surgeon or UPMC hospital staff.

This drink can:

- Help you to feel less thirsty and hungry when you are fasting before surgery
- Reduce nausea and vomiting after your surgery
- Help reduce your body's stress response to surgery

About the drinks:

- The drinks can be kept in the refrigerator or poured over ice
- This drink is gluten-free and safe for people with lactose intolerance
- Kosher

The night before surgery:

- Drink 1 full (12 oz.) bottle before bed

The morning of surgery:

Your surgery time: _____

Finish drinking beverage by: _____

- **Drink 1 full (12 oz.) bottle of clear Gatorade G2® 2 to 4 hours before your hospital arrival time.**
 - For example, if your arrival time is 8 a.m., you should finish the drink no later than 6 a.m.

Cleaning Your Skin Before Surgery - Chlorhexidine Soap

The bacteria that are normally found on your skin can sometimes cause an infection in your incision after surgery. Here is how to lower your risk of having an infection in your incision.

- Use Chlorhexidine (CHG) soap to shower **each evening for 3 days** before the day of your surgery. If you are allergic to Chlorhexidine, you can use an antibacterial soap like Dial® or Safeguard® to shower.
- Chlorhexidine soap will help remove bacteria that you cannot see on your skin that could enter your incision and cause an infection.
- Brush your teeth at least twice a day for 1 week before your surgery. Bacteria live inside your mouth, too. Using an antiseptic mouthwash (Listerine® is one example) also helps lower the amount of bacteria in your mouth.

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What is Chlorhexidine Antimicrobial Skin Cleanser?

- It is a liquid soap that is stronger than regular soap.
- It is also called Hibiclens® or Dyna-Hex®.
- You can get it from your pharmacy or doctor's office when you schedule your procedure.
- Do not wash your face or hair with this soap.
- Do not use it directly on your genitals.

What You Will Need:

- 2 clean washcloths
- Antibacterial soap, like Dial® or Safeguard®
- Bottle of Chlorhexidine soap

Each time you take a shower with the Chlorhexidine soap, please do the following:

1. Using the first washcloth, wash your whole body in the shower with the antibacterial soap (such as Dial® or Safeguard®). You may wash your hair with your normal shampoo. Rinse off and do not use that wash cloth again.
2. Turn the water off or move away from the shower spray.
3. Pour 1/3 of a 4 oz. bottle of Chlorhexidine soap onto the second clean, wet washcloth.
4. Wash where you will be having surgery.
5. Scrub in circular motions. Be sure to get in all skin folds.
6. Wash the rest of your body, from your chin to your toes, ending with the groin area.
7. Once you are finished, turn the shower back on, or move back under the spray, and rinse the soap off your body completely.
8. After your shower, pat yourself dry with a freshly washed towel. Do not use any powder, deodorants, or lotions. Dress with freshly washed clothing or pajamas.
 - Some common side effects of Chlorhexidine soap are itchiness, redness, and irritation of the skin. These side effects usually go away quickly. However, if the skin irritation does not go away, or gets worse, call your doctor.
 - Do not use in eyes, ears, or mouth.
 - If you develop a skin reaction, stop using immediately. If the reaction is severe (such as hives, blisters, swelling, or reactions that do not go away quickly), call your doctor right away.
 - If Chlorhexidine is accidentally swallowed, contact the Poison Control Center immediately at **1-800-221-1222** (Central Pa.). Keep out of the reach of children.

What to Expect in the Hospital

Patients who follow an ERAS program recover faster and go home sooner.

- You can expect to be up and out of bed the same day as your surgery.
- You can expect to be eating a normal diet the day after surgery.
- You can expect that all tubes and drains will be removed as soon as possible.
- Make sure you have made all arrangements for going home, including who will drive you home, before your surgery day.

You will be discharged from the hospital as soon as you are up out of bed, moving, eating, passing gas, and have your pain under control. This can be as early as a day or 2 after your surgery. You will be discharged (sent home) from the hospital when you:

- Are able to tolerate a normal diet
- Can walk with minimal help
- Can take pain medicine by mouth and pain is controlled
- Have a bowel movement or gas
- Are fever free and vital signs are stable
- Have no complications with your wound/incision

After Your Surgery

What can I do to help myself recover after surgery?

Follow the instructions you get after surgery. These are called *post-operative discharge instructions*. You may have special instructions for your kind of surgery, but here are some reminders for everyone:

- Wash your hands with soap and water often. This will help to prevent infection.
- Check your incision every day for signs of infection. Call your surgeon's office right away if you notice:
 - Redness
 - Swelling
 - Drainage
 - Fever over 100.4
- Call your surgeon if your pain does not get better.
- Go to all of your appointments after your surgery.

The ERAS program helps to get your body ready for surgery. After surgery, ERAS helps you manage your pain and get moving again so you can feel better quickly. The most important part of ERAS is that it helps you to participate in your own care. You can help determine how your recovery occurs.

Be sure you understand the plan. Ask questions if you are not sure.



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