

What to Expect Today

Howard County Medical Center

These are general guidelines for your surgical experience. Please note, variations may occur.

Thank you for choosing Johns Hopkins Howard County Medical Center for your surgical needs. We hope you get well very soon.

Before Surgery, You Will...

- put on a hospital gown, have your vital signs taken, medications and medical history reviewed, and have an IV placed
- place your clothing in a secure locker, to be returned to you once you are in the recovery area (please have a family member or care partner hold onto valuables such as cell phone, wallet, purse, glasses or dentures)
- provide the name and number of a responsible adult, 18 years or older, who will drive you home from the hospital
- meet with your surgeon to discuss the risks and benefits of your surgery and answer any questions you may have prior to obtaining your consent
- meet with an anesthesia provider to review your anesthesia plan and obtain consent
- receive a patient identification number for your care partner so they can track your progress on the status board located in the Family Surgical Waiting Room.

After Your Procedure:

- Contact your surgeon if you develop shortness of breath and/or thigh or calf pain.
- Your surgeon will speak to your care partner in the waiting room or by phone to let them know how your procedure went. Surgeons do not come to the recovery area as you will be too drowsy to remember speaking with them.
- You will be taken to the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) where the first phase of recovery occurs. Our staff will focus on your breathing and pain management. Every effort will be made not to prolong this phase of your care – it typically lasts 45 minutes.
- Once you meet national post-procedure standards, you will be discharged from the PACU. Full recovery from anesthesia can take longer than 45 minutes. It is common to still feel drowsy when you leave the PACU.
- Full recovery from anesthesia can take up to 24 hours, so you may want to sleep once you are home.
- For the first 24 hours, we ask that you not drive, drink alcohol, smoke any substances or make any legal decisions.
- Anesthesia can cause nausea. Avoid high fat, spicy, greasy foods for the first 24 hours.
- For the safest recovery, have someone stay with you at home after the procedure.
- Inflammation at the IV site is rare and can be treated with a damp, warm wash cloth or compress.
- You will leave the hospital with more specific discharge instructions from your surgeon called an after visit summary (AVS). Keep these written instructions close and refer to them as needed. This is important information regarding pain control, diet, activity, wound care and specific instructions related to your particular procedure.