

## GENERAL ANESTHESIA DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

- You may be sleepy or drowsy for the next 12-24 hours after anesthesia. Make sure you have someone with you, and try to rest.
- For the next 24 hours DO NOT:
  - Drive a vehicle or operate any machinery or equipment that requires focusing or concentration
  - Consume any alcoholic beverages or drugs other than the ones prescribed by your physician
  - Sign any legal documents or make any legal or major decisions
  - Make any major purchases
- Headaches, vague soreness and/or stiffness are common side effects of anesthesia and may persist for several days.
- Fatigue may persist for 24-48 hours.
- A mild sore throat is common for 24-48 hours following a general anesthetic. You may use throat lozenges for comfort.
- After surgery, it is VERY IMPORTANT that you take some steps to ensure that you are breathing well. Often after surgery, patients are afraid to breathe normally or cough because of discomfort or tightness. If your lungs are not expanding fully, and you are not coughing up secretions, then complications such as pneumonia can occur. Try to deep breath and cough every hour after surgery while you are awake. You may have a breathing machine (incentive spirometer) provided by the hospital to help with this, and you may also squeeze a pillow over your abdomen when coughing to help with discomfort.
- When you feel like eating, start with fluids like Jell-O or soup. You may advance to a normal diet as tolerated, but try to avoid spicy or rich foods for the first 1-2 days until anesthesia has worn off or you may upset your stomach. Make sure to drink plenty of fluids.
- It is very important to begin walking with assistance right away, DO NOT remain in bed. When you are in bed, make sure to exercise your legs frequently.
- If you are unable to urinate after 8 hours, call your surgeon.
- If you have any questions or problems that are related to your anesthetic, call your surgeon.