

After your anaesthetic

Having a **general anaesthetic** can affect your judgement or ability to think clearly. This may last for up to 24 hours. You will need **someone to help take care of you** during this time.

Causes of tiredness after surgery may include:

- Irregular sleep patterns
- Anxiety
- Discomfort or pain
- Blood loss, causing anaemia
- The condition you had surgery for
- Not eating and/or drinking as you would normally

These effects should gradually improve as you heal and by the time you leave hospital. Try to keep moving gently and regularly unless your clinical team have advised against this.

Important, for 24–36 hours after your anaesthetic or longer if you feel unwell.

- Do not sign any legal documents, agreements or cheques
- Do not operate any machinery, drive, or cycle
- Arrange for assistance with childcare
- Avoid drinking alcohol
- Avoid posting on social media

More help and advice

www.rcoa.ac.uk/patient-information

Advice for carers

<https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2021-11/12-SedationCarer2021web.pdf>

For specific breastfeeding information

<https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/anaesthetics/>

How you feel afterwards depends mainly on the operation you have had, and on the pain-relief medicine that you need to treat any pain that you have.

General anaesthetics can cause side effects which are generally short-term (last a few hours).

You may feel more tired than usual for several days after an operation. You may be more tired for a longer period of time after a major surgical procedure.

Pain relief after surgery

You may be given a supply of painkillers. when you leave the hospital. It is sensible to buy some over-the-counter painkillers to have ready at home.

You may go home with opioid or morphine-type pain relief following your operation. It is important that you reduce and then stop these medications as soon as possible, as their continued long-term use can cause harm.

Speak to your GP if you still need to take painkillers two weeks after leaving hospital.

If you feel very unwell or have a fever, please call your hospital team

You can contact the general switchboard and ask for the ward where you were last looked after: Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham: **0121 371 2000**. Heartlands Hospital, Good Hope Hospital, and Solihull Hospital: **0121 424 2000**.

You can call **111** for urgent medical assistance. For emergencies call **999**. Explain your symptoms and give details about your recent operation.

If you have feedback about your care please contact **0121 371 4400** or email **complaints@uhb.nhs.uk**