When will I be able to go home?

Patients usually go home between one and four hours after surgery. When you can go home is determined by your medical condition and how you have responded to your surgery and anesthesia. You will be released to go home with a reliable family member or friend once it is ok for you to leave. Rarely is it necessary to stay overnight in the hospital.

What can I expect at home?

Patients often feel sleepy and may have minor muscle aches, sore throat, dizziness, nausea, or minor headaches. Rest – it allows your body to heal. Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated. Take pain medicine as directed by your surgeon. If you have any questions, contact your surgeon.

What will be my follow-up?

A nurse will call you at home 1-3 days after your surgery to see how you feel and if you have had any problems. You will also have a follow-up appointment with your surgeon.

Will I receive a separate bill from the anesthesiologist?

Your anesthesiologist is a physician specialist, like your surgeon or internist, and you may receive a bill for your anesthesiologist's professional services that are not covered by your insurance. If you have any financial concerns, please talk with your anesthesiologist.
Will I have a preoperative interview?
YES. You will be scheduled for an interview with a registered nurse about a week before your surgery. Have your current list of medications available and a list of questions you would like to ask. During your interview, your nurse will review your medical and surgical history, your allergies, and the medications you take, including any medication patches. The nurse will instruct you on any tests that may need to be done prior to surgery.

What about eating and drinking before my surgery?
For safety during most procedures, it is necessary for you to have an empty stomach. As a general rule, you should not eat or drink anything after midnight before your surgery. This includes all food and liquids, chewing tobacco, chewing gum, candy, mints, throat lozenges, etc. Under some circumstances, you may be given permission to drink clear liquids up to 4 hours before your anesthetic. Your surgeon or the preoperative nurse will give you specific instructions. You may brush your teeth and rinse your mouth the day of surgery, but do not swallow.

Will I need someone to take me home?
YES. You must make arrangements for a responsible adult to take you home after your anesthetic. You will not be allowed to leave alone or drive yourself home. It is strongly recommended someone stay with you during the first 24 hours after your surgery.

Should I take my usual medications?
Your surgeon or the preoperative nurse will instruct you as to what medications to take. Herbal preparations should be discontinued one week before your surgery.

What should I wear?
- Wear loose fitting clothing.
- Do not wear makeup.
- Do not shave the area where your surgery will be.

What should I bring?
- Your insurance or MediCal cards, your ID card/driver’s license, and a list of your current medications.
- If you wear contact lens, bring the container and solution for them or wear your glasses.
- NO jewelry, valuables or body piercing jewelry.

What if I become sick before my surgery or need to cancel my appointment?
Call your surgeon’s office or the hospital operator at 252-4411 and leave a message with the Nursing Supervisor as soon as possible.

What happens before my surgery?
A nurse will take your vital signs. Intravenous fluids will be started and preoperative medications given, if any. You will meet your anesthesiologist who will review your medical and anesthetic history and the results of any tests.

What happens during my surgery?
Monitoring devices will be attached, such as a blood pressure cuff, an EKG, and pulse oximetry finger probe to monitor your oxygen level. Your anesthesiologist is responsible for your comfort and well-being and will continuously monitor your response to anesthesia and surgery.

What can I expect after the operation?
You will be taken to the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (Recovery Room) and closely watched until you are awake and stable. Medications are often given by your anesthesiologist to minimize pain, nausea, and vomiting during and after your surgery. The amount of discomfort you experience will depend on the type of surgery and other factors.

What types of anesthesia are available?
There may be several types of anesthesia available for your surgery. In some cases, the surgical procedure will determine which kind of anesthesia may be used. Based on your medical history, a particular type of anesthetic may have an additional margin of safety. As an outpatient, some techniques may allow you to recover more quickly with fewer side effects. Your preferences will also be considered in the selection of the best anesthetic plan for your procedure.

There are four anesthetic options:

General Anesthesia: General Anesthesia achieves unconsciousness with intravenous or inhaled anesthetics which leave you unable to feel, see, hear, or remember anything during your procedure.

Regional Anesthesia: Local anesthetic is administered around nerves close to the part of the body where your surgery will be to produce numbness. Epidural or spinal blocks anesthetize both lower legs and the abdomen. Other nerve blocks may be done that make an arm or leg numb. In addition to the regional anesthetics, medications can be given that will make you feel comfortable, relaxed, and sleepy.

Monitored Anesthesia Care: Pain medications, sedatives, or both are given in your intravenous line to help you feel relaxed and sleepy. You may have local anesthetic administered to provide additional pain control during and after your procedure.

Local Anesthesia: Your surgeon will administer local anesthetic that will cause numbness at the surgery site. In this case, there may not be an anesthesiologist with you.

What can I expect after the operation?
You will be taken to the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (Recovery Room) and closely watched until you are awake and stable. Medications are often given by your anesthesiologist to minimize pain, nausea, and vomiting during and after your surgery. The amount of discomfort you experience will depend on the type of surgery and other factors.