



A Patient's Guide to a Successful Recovery



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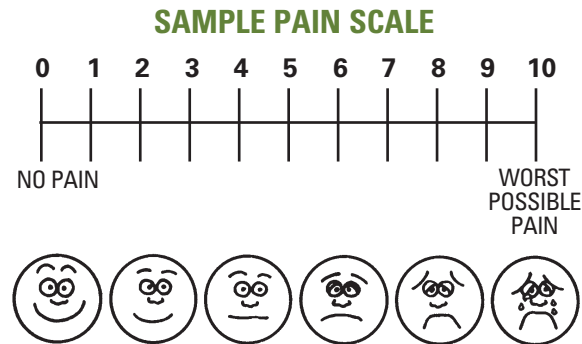


Treat Pain Successfully

Pain management is a critical component of every surgery. Your surgeon, anesthesiologist and nurse will each play an important role in pain control during your hospital stay.

Our effective team approach allows patients to rest, recover and achieve early mobility, while limiting the side effects from too little or too much pain medication.

You will be asked to rate your pain on a 0–10 scale as shown below:



It is normal to have some pain following surgery. Our goal is to help you get your pain to a tolerable level. Both drug and non-drug treatments are available to help reduce your pain.

What kinds of pain will I have after surgery?

You may be surprised where you experience pain after surgery. Quite often, the incision is not the only area of discomfort. You may or may not feel the following:

- **Muscle Pain:** Changing positions, walking early, ice and heat may help ease muscle pain.
- **Throat Pain:** Your throat may feel sore or scratchy with some hoarseness if a breathing tube was used in the operating room. Lozenges, ice chips or warm liquids may help.
- **Movement Pain:** Sitting up, walking and coughing are all very important recovery steps after surgery, but they may cause increased pain at or around the surgical site. Your physicians, nurses and therapists will set safe limits on your activity.
- **Gas Pain:** Gas pain is common with laparoscopic procedures, often felt in the chest and shoulders. Changing positions and walking early help ease this type of pain.

What can I do to help keep my pain under control?

Good communication is the most important aspect of pain management. Please tell your care team when you are having pain. Don't wait until your pain is severe; it's easier to help control pain when treated early.

Non-drug pain relief methods

- Ice or heat (per surgeon)
- Changing positions/walking
- Elevate extremity
- Distraction (visiting, watching TV, reading, music)
- Rest

Medications for pain relief

Your surgeon MAY prescribe non-opioid or opioid medications.

- Opioids are usually used for severe pain. Opioids may cause drowsiness, nausea/vomiting, constipation, or interfere with your breathing. If you have these symptoms, talk to your physician.
- Consider over-the-counter options such as Tylenol or NSAIDs (ibuprofen/Aleve/Advil), as approved by your surgeon/care team. NSAIDs reduce swelling and soreness, and relieve mild to moderate pain. These medications can lessen or eliminate the need for stronger medicines.

For some orthopedic procedures, your surgeon or anesthesiologist may visit with you about placing a nerve block. This is based on your type of surgery and surgeon preference.

Your care team at Avera is committed to providing you with the safest and most effective pain management strategies that are most acceptable to you.

Managing Nausea

You may feel sick to your stomach after surgery from pain, anesthesia, medications or the stress of the surgery.

During surgery, you typically will get some form of anti-nausea medication to help prevent post-operative nausea.

If you have a history of nausea with surgery or motion sickness, please let your surgical team know. Drug and non-drug options are available.

Aromatherapy patches are available for patient use. These may assist in reducing nausea and anxiety. Talk to your care team if interested.