

PATIENT AWARENESS · FOR PATIENTS & FAMILIES

Before Your Surgery

A Patient Information Booklet

A Dr. Priyamvada Goel educational resource — for residents, students, and curious patients.

If you or someone you care for has surgery scheduled, this short booklet will help you arrive prepared, ask the right questions, and recover well. It is not medical advice — it is a starting point for the conversation with your team.

What anaesthesia is

- Anaesthesia is the controlled, reversible state that allows surgery to happen without you being aware of it, without you feeling pain, and without you moving.
- The anaesthesiologist is the doctor who plans this care, sits with you throughout the operation, and looks after your breathing, circulation, and comfort.

The pre-anaesthetic visit

- This is your chance to ask everything. It is not a formality.
- Bring a written list of all your medications, including over-the-counter and herbal preparations.
- Tell your team about any past anaesthetic experiences — good or difficult.
- Mention loose teeth, dentures, sleep apnoea, recent coughs and colds, and any allergies.

Fasting and medications

- You will be asked not to eat for several hours before surgery, and to drink clear fluids only up to a stated time. This is for your safety.
- Most of your usual medications will continue. Your team will tell you which to hold and when to take the rest.

On the day

- Arrive on time, with someone who can take you home.
- You will meet your anaesthesiologist again before going into the operating room.
- You will wake up in a recovery area, looked after closely until you are comfortable enough to return to the ward.

After surgery

- Pain control is part of your care. If you are uncomfortable, say so.
- Move early, drink early (when allowed), and ask questions whenever something is not clear.
- Call your doctor for: fever, increasing pain, bleeding, breathlessness, or anything that worries you.

Questions worth asking

- What kind of anaesthesia will I have, and why?
- What are the most likely side effects, and what is the plan for them?
- How will my pain be controlled after the operation?
- When can I expect to eat, drink, and walk?
- Who do I call if I have a problem at home?