



ANZCA
FPM

PATIENT INFORMATION

Preparing for your operation

Having surgery under anaesthesia can be a bit daunting, especially if it's your first time. But there are a few simple things you can do to get yourself better prepared for your surgery. A little bit of preparation before your anaesthesia can make a huge difference.

Firstly, remember you're in very safe hands. All anaesthetists in Australia and New Zealand are highly trained and accredited doctors. They'll be with you and closely monitoring you throughout your operation, with your safety as the priority.

What does my anaesthetist need to know before my operation?

Every patient – and every operation – is different, which means your response to anaesthesia will be too. So, there are a few things your anaesthetist will need to know about you before your operation:

- Your general health and fitness.
- Any existing health conditions or allergies.
- Any medication you're taking.
- Any issues you or your family members may have had with anaesthesia in the past.
- And anything else you do that might affect your anaesthesia.

The consultation with your anaesthetist prior to surgery is a good time for you to ask any questions. If you're a smoker, your anaesthetist will probably ask you to give smoking a break – even quitting for a short period is helpful. The better you look after your body before your operation, the quicker you will recover.

Can I eat before my operation?

Your anaesthetist will give you specific instructions on when to stop eating and drinking before your surgery, because having undigested food or any liquid containing particles in your system can cause serious complications.

What happens before my operation?

Before you go into the operating theatre, your anaesthetist will generally have another conversation with you to check on your comfort and discuss any last-minute questions.

What happens after my operation?

Your anaesthetist will be with you as the anaesthesia wears off to make sure you're okay and feeling as comfortable as possible.

Can I drive after I've had anaesthesia?

You'll need to arrange for a family member or friend to pick you up after your surgery, because it won't be safe for you to drive for at least 24 hours, as your reflexes take time to get back to normal.



As a leading authority on anaesthesia in Australia and New Zealand, ANZCA provides accessible, evidence-based information designed to help you make informed decisions. Scan the QR code to visit our website anzca.edu.au. This information is a guide only and should not replace information supplied by your anaesthetist.