



**National
Anaesthesia Day**
October 16, 2014



Stop smoking before your anaesthetic – every day helps

Research shows that smoking makes your recovery from surgery more difficult. However if you stop smoking for even just a short time before you have an operation it will significantly reduce the risk of problems during and after your surgery.

Stopping smoking can mean fewer complications with your anaesthetic and the operation itself. The chance of wound infection is decreased, and you may spend less time in hospital, enjoy a faster recovery and your future health will benefit.

Smoking and anaesthesia

If you are having an anaesthetic for surgery you face greater risks if you are a smoker.

- You face more complications during and after your operation.
- Your body is starved of oxygen.
- It is more difficult for you to breathe during and after surgery.
- It can lead to blood clots.
- You will have more trouble recovering.

The good news is that it is never too late to quit – even stopping just 24 hours before your operation helps, but the longer the better.

- After **24 hours**, your blood pressure improves and more oxygen reaches your heart.
- After **1 week**, your lungs are better at removing mucus, tar and dust.
- After **3 to 4 weeks**, your body is better at fighting wound infections.
- Quitting **6-8 weeks** before surgery improves your lung function.

Hospitals can support patients to stop smoking in preparation for their operation.

Ask your anaesthetist and other medical professionals for support to help you stop smoking before you have an anaesthetic and surgery. They can explain why stopping smoking will improve the results of your surgery and reduce the risks of having an anaesthetic, and they can refer you to assistance that will help you quit smoking.

