

## Patient information

# Having a general anaesthetic

## *An easy read leaflet*

If you are ill your doctor may say that you need an operation to help you get better.

Because some people find tests frightening or because they might hurt, the doctor may decide that you need a general anaesthetic.

This leaflet will tell you what happens when you have a general anaesthetic.

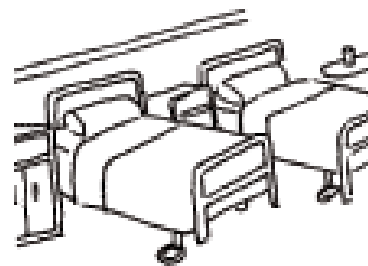
On the day of your operation, you will be given instructions on when to stop eating and drinking a few hours before you come into hospital.



The nurse in the pre-admission unit will tell you what time you must stop eating and drinking.



When you arrive on the ward, you and your carer will be taken to your bed.



The nurse will then ask you some questions and will put a plastic bracelet on your wrist. This has important information about you and should be worn all the time.



A nurse will ask or help you to undress and put on a hospital gown



A doctor called an anaesthetist will come and see you on the ward. The anaesthetist is the doctor who will give you the drug which sends you to sleep before the operation.



Your surgeon will come and see you and talk about your operation and for your consent.



The nurse will rub a special cream on the back of one of your hands. This is so you won't feel the needle used to give you the anaesthetic drug. It won't hurt, although your hand may feel tingly.



You will then wait on the ward until you are ready to have your operation or test. It is important that you do not eat or drink anything unless you are told you can by the nursing staff.



When it is time for your operation a porter will come to take you to the operating theatre on your bed or in a wheelchair. Your carer will be able to accompany you to the anaesthetic room.



In the anaesthetic room, the doctor will talk to you and will put a very thin tube into the back of your hand with a needle. This is where the cream was applied so it will not hurt. The doctor will put the drug through the tube in your hand to make you go to sleep.



You will feel sleepy very quickly and will soon be fast asleep.



When you wake up, the operation or test will be finished. You will wake up in the recovery room, with a nurse looking after you. Your carer will be waiting for you




Ward

On the ward, the nurses will look after you and check your pulse and blood pressure.



If you or your carer need support while you are in hospital, please talk to one of the nurses.

If you have a learning disability and feel you may need additional support during your visit to the hospital, you can contact the Learning Disabilities Liaison Nurse on:

 01284 712750

*If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo) <https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>*



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