

Caring for someone after an MRI with sedation at the Hamilton General Hospital

How long will the MRI and the recovery period take?

Expect the patient to stay at the hospital for 3 to 4 hours.

The MRI will take 45 minutes to 1 hour. The patient will then be transferred to the Post Anaesthetic Care Unit (PACU) for 1 to 1½ hours. The patient will then be transferred to Same Day Surgery for about 1 hour.

When can the patient eat?

When the patient gets home, they may still have numb lips and/or tongue after the sedation (general anaesthesia). They should not have solid foods to start with, as this will increase the chance of choking or inhaling food into their lungs.

1. Start the patient with sips of fluids such as Gatorade, juice or water.
2. If they tolerate fluids, progress to eating soft foods such as yogurt, soft fruits or cooked vegetables without skins, soups, minced or moist meats, cooked cereals, rice or pasta.
3. If they tolerate soft foods, progress to solid foods (regular diet).

What will the patient be like after the sedation?

The patient will still feel the effects of the sedation when they go home.

For 24 hours after the test, they may be:

- less active
- unsteady when moving
- irritable or restless
- drowsy or have trouble sleeping
- nauseous

For the next 24 hours – have someone stay with the patient.

When should I call the family doctor or go to the Emergency Room?

Call the family doctor if:

- you are concerned about the patient's condition
- you notice a change in the patient's breathing or swallowing
- the patient has persistent vomiting
- the patient does not fully wake up after sleeping
- the patient is not back to his or her usual self after 24 hours

If you cannot reach the doctor, take patient to the nearest hospital Emergency Room to be checked.

Important information

For the next 24 hours due to the effects of the sedation, the patient must not:

- drive any type of car, bike or other vehicle
- operate machinery or power tools
- make important decisions or sign a legal document
- drink alcohol, take mind altering substances or smoke. These may react with the anaesthesia medication.

Who should I call if I have questions?

Call your family doctor or the doctor that ordered the test.