

University Clinic for Anaesthesiology
and Pain Therapy
Patient Information

 **INSELSPITAL**

*UNIVERSITÄTSSPITAL BERN
HOPITAL UNIVERSITAIRE DE BERNE
BERN UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL*



A short overview



Central recovery ward

The University Clinic for Anaesthesiology and Pain Therapy at the Inselspital, Bern University Hospital, comprises:

Anaesthesiology

Ensuring that the patient is in a pain-free and, if necessary, sleeping state. During this period, all vital functions are monitored and safeguarded. Nursing care for patients is provided before, during and after surgery.

Central recovery ward

Nursing of patients over several hours or overnight following more extensive operations.

Emergency service

Nursing of patients in immediately life-threatening situations.



In the research laboratory

Pain therapy

Nursing and treatment of patients after operations and in cases of chronic pain.

Research

Improvement of specialist medical activities and knowledge through active research. Studies on people are of course only conducted with their express consent.

Training, CPR

Involvement in the training of students, anaesthetists and healthcare professionals. Organisation of congresses and symposia. Operation of a training centre for cardio-pulmonary resuscitation.

In the interest of legibility, we have refrained from mentioning both sexes although we are of course addressing men and women at all times.

Before and after anaesthesia



On the day before your operation, you will be visited by an anaesthetist who will inform himself about your state of health. In addition, you will be asked about regular consumption of medicines, hypersensitivities and experiences with previous anaesthesias, among other things.

Your anaesthetist will explain the anaesthetic procedure best suited to you and safest for the planned operation. He will also inform you about possible side-effects. Please ask immediately if anything is at all unclear!

Before the anaesthetic: you are not allowed to eat or drink for a specific time before administration of the anaesthetic: two hours for water, six hours for meals and other drinks. Please give contact lenses, false teeth, your watch and easily removable jewellery to the nursing staff on your ward. As a general rule, you will be given a sedative before being accompanied to the operating theatre.

After the anaesthetic you will be monitored and looked after either on the ward, an observation ward, in the central recovery ward or at the University Clinic for Intensive Care.

In the central recovery ward, short visits by no more than two close relatives are permitted between the hours of 08.00 and 21.00. Waiting times must be expected, depending on the workload.

Anaesthesia questionnaire



Before the planned operation, you will be given an anaesthesia questionnaire. In many cases, it will be sent to your home together with the notification requesting you to attend for surgery. Please answer the questions on your current state of health, previous operations and the medications you are currently taking, and bring the completed form with you to the Insel Hospital. You will also find some information on the different anaesthetic procedures and methods. Space is also provided for you to be able to make a note of any questions you may have. Please hand in this questionnaire during your preoperative consultation with the anaesthetist. He will answer your questions and explain the procedure for the anaesthesia. By signing the form, you are confirming that the information provided is accurate and give your consent for the agreed anaesthetic procedure.

Regional anaesthesia



Regional anaesthesia

With some operations the sense of pain can be suppressed by a regional (local) anaesthetic. Various procedures are used to eliminate the sensation of pain in a single limb or a whole part of the body. With a so-called spinal or epidural anaesthesia, the anaesthetist is able to block the transmission of pain in certain areas of the spinal cord. In this case, anaesthetics are injected near the vertebral canal. The insertion of the needle is essentially painless since the area concerned is first made insensitive. During surgery, you can talk to us, listen to music or sleep.

Side-effects of regional anaesthesia are rare and generally temporary. Head or back pain may be experienced following spinal or epidural anaesthesia. These respond well to treatment and disappear after a few days. Occasionally, temporary sensory disturbances may be observed in the anaesthetised area, severe nerve damage is very rare.

General anaesthesia



In the operating room

For many operations, it is necessary to carry out a general or full anaesthesia. The medicines used, which are injected into a vein as an infusion or administered in gaseous form in the air being inhaled, can be controlled in such a way that you sleep during surgery and experience no pain. To ensure that the body receives an adequate supply of oxygen during this time, you will be given artificial respiration via a thin tube placed in your windpipe or a laryngeal mask placed in the back of your mouth. Regional and general anaesthesia may be used in combination for certain operations. During surgery, you will be continuously monitored and looked after by the anaesthesia team.



With modern anaesthesia, serious side-effects have become extremely rare, on account of the fact that we continuously monitor all vital body functions and employ modern substances with minimal side-effects.

Side-effects such as nausea, vomiting, sore throat and hoarseness may be experienced. These generally disappear of their own accord after a few days. Effective medicines are available for stubborn cases.

Pain therapy



Pain therapy offers patients the following options to treat postoperative and chronic pain:

Epidural and spinal anaesthesia

A small pump administers special medicines in the vicinity of the spinal cord, thereby reducing the sense of pain.

Patient-controlled analgesia (pain relief)

You will receive a small pump, personally tailored to your needs, which will administer an individually programmed dose of analgesic directly into a vein in the form of an infusion at the push of a button.

Conventional therapy

We employ special medicines for targeted treatment of acute or chronic pain.



Nerve block

We inhibit pain transmission by local anaesthetisation of individual nerves.

Chronic pain clinic

We examine, treat and look after outpatients suffering from chronic pain.

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