

# Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS)

## The Goal

Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) is a multimodal, multidisciplinary approach to providing best practice care before, during and after surgery. The overall goals of ERAS care are to help patients stay strong, recover faster with fewer complications, and have lower healthcare costs.

## The Process

In 2013, four Strategic Clinical Networks (SCNs) partnered with clinical care teams, leaders, and patients to adapt and implement ERAS guidelines at local hospitals. Initially, ERAS guidelines were piloted at six sites for patients undergoing colorectal surgeries. Results from the first six sites were positive and showed that patients receiving ERAS care were able to go home sooner, with fewer complications and no increase in readmission rates.

Over the last three years, ERAS has spread to nine surgical sites and other elective surgeries (gynecology, pancreas, liver, cystectomy, major head and neck, and breast reconstruction). Local site teams are supported to improve patient education, surgical and anesthesia practices, and pre- and post-operative care. An important part of ERAS care is helping patients to prepare for their surgery and their recovery at home.



## The Outcome

Since ERAS care implementation began in Alberta in 2013, there have been significant clinical improvements and a positive return on investment. Following surgery, ERAS patients have been shown to experience fewer surgical, lung, and heart problems. In the first two years, ERAS implementation at the six pilot sites contributed a net savings of \$2.3 million (\$1,768 per patient), a gain four times greater than the implementation investment. Similar outcomes exist for ERAS gynecology cancer patients, including shorter hospital stays (by 2 to 4 days), fewer complications, and cost savings of \$956 per patient.

## The Team

ERAS Alberta is sponsored by the Surgery SCN. It brings together clinical experts with researchers and patients from across the province. Collaborators include: Diabetes, Obesity and Nutrition (DON), Cancer and Seniors Health SCNs; Zone/ site operations, Nutrition and Food Services, Pharmacy, Clinical Knowledge & Content Management (CKCM), and Analytics (DIMR).



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