

Visiting the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)

Welcome to the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) at Brigham and Women's Hospital. The PACU is an area where patients are taken after surgery to recover from anesthesia. We have prepared this information to help you and your family during your stay.

The Family Liaison staff routinely informs family members when a patient has arrived in the PACU. Upon arrival in the PACU, the nurses will be talking with the surgeons and anesthesia staff to review the procedure that was done and the plan for care after surgery.

When you arrive in the PACU, the staff will be checking to see how awake you are and how you are feeling as you come out of surgery. Heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing are monitored continuously throughout your stay and the nurses and doctors will work to keep you as comfortable as possible.

It will take some time for the nursing staff to assess and evaluate your needs and address any concerns. The Family Liaison staff will make arrangements with your family and the PACU nurse for a brief postoperative visit. They will be directed to the PACU and brought to the bedside. The PACU is a very large open area that allows for close monitoring of all patients. There are as many as 32 patients in various stages of recovery. We encourage a brief visit so that the recovery process may continue.

Most patients will be in the PACU anywhere from one hour to four hours. The PACU nurse should be able to give your family members an idea of when you will be transferred to the general floor.

We want the hospital experience to be positive for patients and family members. Please feel free to discuss any concerns you have in the Pre Admitting visit.

Source: Brigham & Women's Hospital, Boston