

# The Advantages and Disadvantages of Outpatient Surgery

Marlinie Mekenz\*

Department of General Surgeon, University of Diamante do Norte, Diamante do Norte, Brazil

\*Corresponding author: Marlinie Mekenz, Department of General Surgeon, University of Diamante do Norte, Diamante do Norte, Brazil; Email: marlin34mecken@gmail.com

**Received:** July 04, 2024, Manuscript No. IPJUS-24-15035; **Editor assigned:** July 09, 2024, PreQC No. IPJUS-24-15035 (PQ); **Reviewed:** July 23, 2024, QC No. IPJUS-24-15035; **Revised:** August 01, 2024, Manuscript No. IPJUS-24-15035 (R); **Published:** August 29, 2024, Invoice No. IPJUS-24-15035

**Citation:** Mekenz M (2024) The Advantages and Disadvantages of Outpatient Surgery. J Univ Surg Vol.12 No.4: 032.

## Introduction

Outpatient surgery, also known as ambulatory or same-day surgery, has become increasingly popular over the past few decades. This type of surgery allows patients to return home the same day the procedure is performed, as opposed to inpatient surgery, which requires at least one overnight stay in the hospital. This shift in surgical practice has been driven by advancements in medical technology, anesthesia and surgical techniques. However, like any medical approach, outpatient surgery has its advantages and disadvantages.

## Description

### Advantages of outpatient surgery

**Reduced healthcare costs:** One of the most significant advantages of outpatient surgery is the reduction in healthcare costs. Hospital stays can be expensive due to the costs associated with room and board, nursing care and other inpatient services. By eliminating the need for an overnight stay, outpatient surgery significantly reduces these expenses. This cost-saving is beneficial for both healthcare providers and patients, potentially lowering insurance premiums and out-of-pocket expenses.

**Convenience and comfort:** Outpatient surgery offers greater convenience for patients. They can return to the comfort of their own homes shortly after the procedure, avoiding the stress and discomfort of a hospital stay. Being in a familiar environment can also contribute to a faster and more comfortable recovery. Additionally, the scheduling flexibility of outpatient procedures can be more accommodating to patients' personal and professional lives.

**Lower risk of hospital-acquired infections:** Hospitals, despite stringent hygiene practices, can be hotspots for infections. By minimizing the time spent in a hospital environment, outpatient surgery reduces the risk of hospital-acquired infections. This is particularly important for patients with weakened immune systems or those undergoing procedures that could make them more susceptible to infections.

**Faster recovery times:** Studies have shown that patients who undergo outpatient surgery often experience quicker recovery times compared to those who have inpatient surgery. The ability

to recuperate at home, combined with the reduced physical and psychological stress of not staying in a hospital, can expedite the healing process. This faster recovery can lead to an earlier return to normal activities and work, benefiting both the patient and the broader economy.

**Advanced surgical techniques and technology:** The rise of outpatient surgery has been facilitated by advancements in minimally invasive surgical techniques and anesthesia. Procedures such as laparoscopy and robotic-assisted surgery require smaller incisions, leading to less postoperative pain, reduced scarring, and shorter recovery periods. Similarly, modern anesthesia techniques allow for quicker recovery from anesthesia, enabling patients to be discharged sooner.

**Enhanced patient satisfaction:** Patient satisfaction is often higher with outpatient surgery due to the combination of reduced costs, convenience and the ability to recover at home. Patients tend to appreciate the minimal disruption to their daily lives and the lower stress levels associated with outpatient procedures.

### Disadvantages of outpatient surgery

**Limited scope of procedures:** Outpatient surgery is not suitable for all types of procedures. Complex surgeries that require extensive monitoring, significant postoperative care or a high risk of complications are generally not performed on an outpatient basis. Patients needing such surgeries must still undergo inpatient procedures, limiting the applicability of outpatient surgery.

**Risk of complications at home:** While outpatient surgery reduces the risk of hospital-acquired infections, it transfers some of the risks to the home environment. Patients and their families must be vigilant about postoperative care and complications such as bleeding, infection or adverse reactions to anesthesia may arise after discharge. Without immediate medical supervision, these complications can become serious if not promptly addressed.

**Inadequate pain management :** Managing postoperative pain at home can be challenging. In a hospital setting, healthcare professionals can provide continuous pain management and adjust medications as needed. At home, patients may struggle to adequately control their pain, leading to discomfort and potentially slower recovery. Additionally, there is a risk of misuse

or overuse of prescribed pain medications, contributing to the opioid crisis.

**Limited access to emergency care:** In the event of a postoperative emergency, patients recovering at home may face delays in receiving critical care. While hospitals are equipped to handle sudden complications immediately, patients at home must rely on emergency medical services, which can take time to arrive. This delay can be particularly dangerous for certain high-risk patients.

**Need for adequate home support:** Outpatient surgery requires that patients have adequate support at home. This includes someone to assist with daily activities, monitor for complications and help with transportation to follow-up appointments. Not all patients have access to this level of support, which can complicate recovery and increase the risk of complications.

**Psychological impact:** The psychological impact of surgery should not be underestimated. Some patients may feel anxious about recovering at home without the immediate availability of medical professionals. This anxiety can affect their overall recovery experience and potentially lead to increased stress and slower healing.

## Case studies and statistical analysis

**Case study 1. Laparoscopic cholecystectomy:** Laparoscopic cholecystectomy, the removal of the gallbladder, is a common procedure that is often performed on an outpatient basis. Studies have shown that patients undergoing this procedure as outpatients experience shorter recovery times, lower costs and high levels of satisfaction. However, the success of outpatient laparoscopic cholecystectomy relies on careful patient selection, ensuring that only those with low risk of complications are chosen.

**Case study 2. Arthroscopic knee surgery:** Arthroscopic knee surgery, used to diagnose and treat joint problems, is another procedure commonly performed on an outpatient basis. Patients benefit from the minimally invasive nature of the surgery, which allows for rapid recovery and minimal pain. However, the need for effective pain management and physical therapy post-surgery highlights the importance of a well-structured outpatient care plan.

**Statistical analysis:** A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) compared the outcomes of inpatient and outpatient surgeries across various procedures. The study found that outpatient surgeries had a 30% lower risk

of complications compared to inpatient surgeries, largely due to the reduced risk of hospital-acquired infections and quicker mobilization post-surgery. However, it also noted that the rates of readmission were slightly higher for outpatient surgeries, underscoring the importance of proper patient selection and postoperative care.

## Future trends in outpatient surgery

**Telemedicine and remote monitoring:** The integration of telemedicine and remote monitoring technologies is poised to revolutionize outpatient surgery. Patients can have virtual follow-up appointments and wearable devices can transmit real-time health data to healthcare providers, enabling early detection of complications and timely interventions. This technology will further enhance the safety and convenience of outpatient surgery.

**Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) protocols:** Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) protocols are evidence-based guidelines designed to optimize perioperative care. These protocols include preoperative counseling, optimized anesthesia and postoperative pain management strategies. Implementing ERAS protocols in outpatient surgery can improve patient outcomes, reduce recovery times and further decrease the risk of complications.

**Expanded scope of procedures:** As medical technology continues to advance, the scope of procedures that can be safely performed on an outpatient basis is expected to expand. Innovations in surgical techniques, anesthesia and postoperative care will enable more complex surgeries to be done without requiring an overnight hospital stay.

## Conclusion

Outpatient surgery offers numerous advantages, including reduced healthcare costs, greater convenience, lower risk of hospital-acquired infections and faster recovery times. However, it also presents challenges such as limited scope of procedures, risk of complications at home, inadequate pain management and the need for adequate home support. Careful patient selection, robust postoperative care plans and advancements in medical technology are essential to maximizing the benefits and minimizing the risks associated with outpatient surgery. As healthcare continues to evolve, outpatient surgery is likely to play an increasingly prominent role in delivering efficient, cost-effective and patient-centered care.