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Postoperative symptoms experienced by day-case surgery gynecological patients, and how they affect sense of comfort after discharge.

Introduction. The concept of day-case surgery is in progress, the number of patients is constantly increasing as more complex types of surgery are performed in day-case surgery. Herein, old patients with more comorbidity are more frequently scheduled for day-case surgery. Sufficient understanding of patient health after discharge is important and a goal as well as a means for successful outpatient surgery and anesthesia. Studies show that patients may experience uncomfortable and stressful symptoms related to the surgical procedure in the early postoperative course, requiring treatment, support, and guidance. Insight into patients' experiences of symptoms shortly after discharge from day-case surgery is therefore relevant.

Aim. To explore ambulatory gynecological patients' experiences of postoperative symptoms the first postoperative day in order to prevent complications as well as insecurity after discharge.

Materials & Methods. A qualitative study with individual semi-structured interviews conducted by telephone on the first postoperative day. We conducted a total of 30 interviews. We sampled patients strategically according to type of surgical procedure (vaginal plastic repair, tension free vaginal tape, urethral bulking, Botox injection in the bladder, diagnostic laparoscopic and hysteroscopic procedures).

Results. Data were analyzed using Kvale&Brinkmann (2015) systematic text condensation and the following themes were identified. *Being "in good hands" in the day-care surgery unit, difficulty of voiding creates concern, postoperative pain, unprepared for bowel problems, fatigue affecting daily activity, the impact of prior experience.*

Conclusion. The results showed that patients felt secure and experienced continuity of care while in the day-care surgical unit. They felt well-informed and staff was accessible when needed. They described a variety of postoperative symptoms, including fatigue, obstipation, pain, and voiding difficulty. Patients experienced that postoperative symptoms were worrisome and impacted negatively on their functional level.

Perspectives. By asking patients about experienced symptoms the day after surgery, we obtained knowledge which will inform a subsequent survey, a validated questionnaire, in 2020 in cooperation with other day care surgery units in Denmark. The long-term perspective is prevention of insecurity and worries in patients after day-case surgery.