

Be ready for  
your visit!

# PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR SURGERY

TWO VIDEOS: ONE FOR KIDS AND ONE FOR GROWN-UPS



One for kids



One for  
grown-ups

These videos are a great resource. They feature:

- a kid's-eye view of a visit to the surgery center.
- ways we work to make a safe and comforting experience for your child.
- several members of our care team.
- a step-by-step checklist to download.
- other helpful resources.

Visit [mhealth.org/ChildrensSurgeryPrep](http://mhealth.org/ChildrensSurgeryPrep) to see the videos and prepare for your child's surgery. For questions, call your surgeon's clinic or 612-365-1000 day or night.

Surgery date: \_\_\_\_\_

A surgery center nurse will call you a few days before your surgery day to talk about details for getting ready.

# Preparing for Your Child's Surgery

## *A Patient and Family Guide to Surgery and Anesthesia*

Thank you for choosing us to care for your child. We believe children are special. Your child's comfort and safety are our top priorities.

This booklet will help you and your child get ready for surgery day. It includes:

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If you have questions the day of surgery, please call your surgery center.

**Note:** In this handout, the word "surgery" is a general term. It includes surgeries and other procedures or exams your child may have.

### **Important things to do before surgery**

#### ***Within 30 days of surgery***

- Schedule a History and Physical exam (H&P) with your family doctor. Make sure the doctor sends the report to your surgery center.
- Arrange for someone to watch your other children and pets while you and your child are at the surgery center. This lets you focus only on your child's care for that day.
- Call your insurance company for coverage details.

#### ***At least 10 days before surgery***

You'll need to register with the surgery center (give us your insurance and other details). If we haven't yet called for this information, please call 612-672-2000.

#### ***A few days before surgery***

- A nurse will call to review your child's health history and surgery instructions. **This is not the same as registering with the surgery center.** If you don't get a call by the working day before your child's surgery, please call your surgery center.
- If your doctor gives you a copy of any medical reports, please bring them on the day of surgery.
- Make sure a parent or legal guardian can consent (agree) to surgery in person or by telephone before the surgery. **Guardians must bring legal proof of guardianship to the surgery center.**

*FIIRO GAAR AH: Hadii aad ku hadasho Soomaali, waaxda luqadaha, qaybta kaalmada adeegyada, waxay idiin hayaan adeeg kharash la'aan ah. So wac 612-273-3780.*

*ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 612-273-3780.*

We comply with applicable federal civil rights laws and Minnesota laws. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity.

### ***The day before surgery***

- Be sure you have clear liquids at home, ready for your child's return after surgery (water, Gatorade, Jello, apple juice, Pedialyte, Popsicles).
- Call the surgeon's clinic if your child has a cold, rash or fever. We may need to delay the surgery.
- Have your child bathe or shower. Follow your clinic's instructions. Dress your child in clean pajamas. Put them to bed in clean sheets.
- Wash any comfort items you'll bring to the surgery center (favorite blanket, stuffed animal).

### ***Plan your surgery day***

- Have your child bathe or shower again in the morning. Follow your clinic's instructions.
- Don't put on any makeup, powders, lotions, or deodorants. Remove piercings and all jewelry.
- For a list of items to bring, see the Parent checklist at the end of this handout.

### **Eating and drinking guidelines**

For your child's safety, it's very important to follow our instructions for eating and drinking. If the child has even a small amount to eat or drink outside of the times listed here, we may delay or cancel the surgery.

#### ***Why is this so important?***

During surgery, the muscles that keep food and liquid in the stomach will relax. If there's anything in the stomach—even a small amount—it may get into the lungs. This can cause a serious infection.

We want to keep your child safe. If they have even a small amount of food or drink after the allowed time, we may need to delay or cancel the surgery.

Some surgeries have different instructions. Unless your child's surgeon or nurse has given you special instructions, please use the times listed here.

## ***When to stop food and liquids***

When the nurse calls with your instructions, please fill in the times below. If you have questions, call your surgery center.

All foods and liquids—whether by mouth or feeding tube—must be finished by the times listed below.

- Eat and drink as usual until \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m. (8 hours before surgery)
- Offer milk, infant formula, toast and cereal until \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m. (6 hours before surgery).
- Offer breast milk (with nothing added) until: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m. (4 hours before surgery)
- Offer clear liquids until: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m. (2 hours before surgery)
  - Clear liquids include drinks you can see through, like water, apple juice and Pedialyte.
  - For children under 2: Give clear liquids until 2 hours before surgery. Wake your child if needed. This keeps them hydrated for surgery.
- Nothing by mouth after: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m. (2 hours before surgery). This includes gum, candy and breath mints.

## ***What about medicines?***

If your child takes medicine, ask your care team if it's safe to take on the day of surgery. If so, give it with a small sip of water.

**Do not** give medicine with pudding, applesauce, yogurt or other foods.

## **Day of surgery**

### ***What to expect when you arrive***

After you arrive, we will direct you to the surgery area. Be sure to have your insurance and prescription cards with you.

Your child will receive an ID wristband. You will also get a copy of the Patient Bill of Rights.

### **Family waiting area**

The surgery center has a family waiting area with free Wi-Fi and other amenities. You will return to the waiting area during your child's surgery.

Be sure to tell the person at the desk before leaving this area.

### **Pre-op**

A nurse or nursing assistant will take you and your child to the pre-op (pre-operative) room, where we will prepare your child for surgery.

A nurse will check your child's health. They will also:

- Confirm the child's treatment, name and birth date
- Measure your child's height and weight, blood pressure, pulse, temperature and oxygen level
- Ask when your child last had food and drink
- Have your child change into surgery center pajamas or gown

### **Care team visit**

You will meet your child's care team. The surgeon will explain the surgery again. He or she may also mark the site where the surgery will be done.

You will be asked to sign a consent form. This form states that you allow the surgeon to do the surgery. Before you sign the form, be sure to ask any questions you may have. Keep asking questions until you understand the answers.

You will also meet with the anesthesiologist. This is the doctor who will talk with you about the safest sleep plan for your child.

### ***What to expect after surgery***

After surgery, we will take your child to the PACU (post-anesthesia care unit) to wake up. Each child and surgery are different, so the length of time spent in the PACU varies. You will be able to see your child in the PACU.

While in the PACU, a nurse will check your child's temperature, pulse, breathing and blood pressure. The nurse will watch your child closely. If your child is in pain, we will give medicine as needed.

Your child may have an IV (intravenous line) in his or her hand. This is a tiny, flexible tube. We will give fluids and medicines through the IV until your child can drink on his or her own.

Once awake enough and feeling ready to drink, your child may start with some ice chips or clear liquids.

Your child may feel sleepy from the sleep medicine. This is normal. Other side effects include:

- Irritable or dizzy
- Upset stomach
- Muscle aches and pains
- Sore throat (if a tube was used to help with breathing)

These may last for a day or two. Please tell your nurse if you notice any other side effects.

If your child had same-day surgery, he or she will stay in the PACU until it's time to go home. Then, your nurse will review your discharge instructions, so you'll know how to take care of your child at home. You'll receive these in writing as well.

If your child stays overnight, he or she will stay in the PACU until vital signs are stable and a room is ready. This room is private. You may want to bring some of your child's favorite items from the [Parent checklist](#). You can stay overnight in the room with your child—we will provide bedsheets.

### **How can I help my child recover?**

Keep things simple.

- Plan to spend time with younger children, keeping them busy. Older children may want quiet time alone, but they also need to know you are there if they need you.
- Have your child rest and take naps. You might even lie down with your child.
- Offer quiet, restful activities like:
  - Reading together or watching movies
  - Arts and craft projects
  - Word searches, crossword puzzles and other quiet games
  - Talking to friends on the phone
  - Having friends over to watch a movie (for older children)
- Make favorite foods to help your child start eating again.
- Ask yes-or-no questions.
- Don't overwhelm your child with guests.
- Your child may feel pain while healing. To speed healing, it's important to manage the pain. Follow the doctor's orders for giving pain medicine.

# Parent Checklist

## Preparing for Your Child's Surgery

### Parent checklist

#### *Before day of surgery*

- I know when to arrive at the hospital.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Arrival time: \_\_\_\_\_
- I know what time to stop eating and drinking.
  - No eating after: \_\_\_\_\_
  - No drinking after: \_\_\_\_\_
  - No breast milk after: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Nothing at all to eat or drink after: \_\_\_\_\_
- My child has had a pre-surgery physical exam.
- I've planned care for my other children and pets.
- I've cleaned any cloth comfort items that we'll bring to the hospital (blankets, stuffed animals).
- My child had a shower or bath. We followed the special instructions from the clinic.

#### *Day of surgery*

- If my child is ill, I've called the surgeon's clinic.
- My child had a second shower or bath. We followed the special instructions from the clinic.
- My child is wearing loose, comfortable clothing.
- My child has removed all contacts, retainers and jewelry (including piercings).
- My child is not wearing makeup, nail polish, powders, lotions, antiperspirants or deodorants.

- I am bringing these items to the surgery center:
  - Comfort items for child: Pacifier, bottle (for after surgery only!), blanket, stuffed animal, books, magazines, electronic devices (with headphones), etc.
  - For me, while I wait: A book, magazine or electronic device (with headphones)
  - A complete list of medicines that my child takes (or photos of bottles)
  - Inhaler or other medical devices (if child uses)
  - Medical and prescription insurance cards
  - Money or credit card for food, parking, co-pays
  - If surgery is at a hospital:* photo ID for all adults coming to the hospital
  - Foster parents, guardians:* Proof of legal guardianship
  - Nursing mothers:* Pump and supplies
  - An overnight bag, if we have to stay the night

### Child checklist

- My favorite comfort items are clean and packed (stuffed animal, blanket).
- I have a couple small toys or games to play with.
- I have taken a bath or shower to clean my body.
- I have a list of questions for my care team or parents.
- I have items that will help my body feel calm and relaxed (music, movie, phone, tablet or things like that).