

Getting Ready for Surgery

Children's Wisconsin Hospital

Your child will be having surgery at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin. Here is some information to help you get ready.

Before surgery

Meeting with your surgeon or doctor

- You already may have met with your surgeon. If not, you will meet with someone from your surgeon's team. They will talk with you about your child's medical condition and the procedure.
- A history and physical needs to be done within 30 days of your child's surgery. It can be done at your child's doctor's office or the surgeon's clinic. If the physical will not be done in the surgeon's clinic, talk with the surgeon's office staff about the details.
- Children's Hospital of Wisconsin offers a tour before surgery at the Milwaukee hospital. Please see the invitation card in the folder.



Preparing for surgery

Call before surgery

A nurse will call you 1 to 3 days before your child's surgery. The nurse will review your child's health history, final instructions and any possible changes. It is very important to follow these instructions:

- What time you need to be at the hospital. This will most likely be 1 to 2 hours before surgery. It takes time for staff to get your child ready for surgery.
- What medicines your child can take the day of surgery.
- What your child can eat and drink the day before surgery.
- When your child has to stop eating and drinking.

If you have not heard from a nurse by the day before surgery, please call the Pre-op Clinic at 414-266-2762. Leave a message with your child's name, date of surgery, and your phone number. A nurse will return your call as soon as possible.

When to stop eating and drinking before surgery (NPO instructions)

It is very important that you follow these instructions. If your child eats or drinks after the time you are given, the food or drink could get into their lungs when they are given anesthesia. This is called aspiration and could be very dangerous. **Your child's procedure may be cancelled if these instructions are not followed.**

Bath before surgery

- Your child should have a bath before surgery. A bath helps keep bacteria from growing on the skin before surgery.
- Your child may need to have a bath with special soap before surgery. If so, the surgeon and clinic staff will tell you how to do the bath and where to get the soap.

Hospital stay

The staff that will take care of your child

Many staff members with different roles will care for your child. The Medical College of Wisconsin and Children's Hospital of Wisconsin staff work together to care for children. There are many specialists from the Medical College who may care for your child. They are specially trained in the care of children needing surgery. These include doctors, called anesthesiologists, who give medicine to make your child sleep during the procedure. You will meet them before the procedure. Staff, students and volunteers will be wearing a hospital ID badge. Feel free to ask people their names and roles if needed.

Visiting the Post-anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)

After surgery, your child will go to a recovery room (PACU). Your child will stay there until the anesthesia starts to wear off and your child is comfortable. Most families will meet their child in the PACU after surgery. Staff will let you know when you can join your child.

Important things to know:

- Only one parent at a time can be in the recovery room.
- If for any reason we are unable to let you visit, you will get phone updates in the waiting room.
- Your child may be more upset than usual as they wake up from surgery. This is normal.
- When your child is ready to leave the recovery room, other family members will be able to join them.
- If your child goes to a Critical Care unit, the visitor guidelines for that unit must be followed.



Your child's comfort

We will make every effort to keep your child comfortable during their visit to Children's Hospital. This pledge is called the "Comfort Zone". We will help your child cope with discomfort by using relaxation techniques, sedatives and/or pain medicine. We will give you information on pain management choices. We encourage you to talk with your doctor or nurse about your child's comfort.

Visiting

Our main focus is on your hospitalized child. Our goal is to give the best and safest care for your child. To do this, we have visiting guidelines. There may be times when we have to limit the number of visitors. To learn more, please talk with staff.

- Parents and two adult visitors may go with your child to Day Surgery. No visitors under 18 years of age are allowed in Day Surgery. Only two visitors will be allowed in the child's Day Surgery room at a time.
- If your child stays overnight in the hospital, the hospital visitor guidelines will be followed.

Going home

Before you leave the hospital, you will learn how to care for your child at home. This includes:

- Medicines. The reason your child is taking the medicine, the amount, how often, when it was last given and any side effects to watch for at home.
- Dressing changes. If needed, we will talk with you about wound care, supplies and what is covered by your insurance.
- Special diet and activity needs.
- Plans for delivery of any special equipment you will need at home.



You will get copies of all teaching sheets and instructions. There will be phone numbers on your paperwork in case you have questions after you get home.

For more health and wellness information, check out this resource:

<https://kidshealth.org/ChildrensWi/en/parents>

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up