

Children coming into hospital for an operation

Patient information

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If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format
please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید،
لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formie,
proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil,
vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe
de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق
يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

Introduction

You and your child will have been seen in an out patient clinic by a doctor or a surgeon who has arranged for your child to have an operation or procedure. This leaflet explains what to expect when your child comes into Whiston Hospital to have a test or operation under general anaesthetic.

An anaesthetist will see you before the procedure to discuss your child's anaesthetic more fully and answer any questions you may have.

Pre admission visits

Children who attend for pre-admission hospital visits are found to have a better understanding about what will happen to them on their admission to hospital. Your child will receive an appointment to attend a pre-admission clinic.

Parents and carers also have the opportunity to ask questions they have about their child's admission to hospital and any fears can be addressed and explained.

Explanations are given about the planned operation, and your child is physically examined in preparation for their admission.

	Tick
Have I/we packed child's favourite toy / comforter / dummy?	
Have I/we prepared information for staff about any special diet or allergies?	
Have I/we packed all medications?	
Has all jewellery and nail varnish been removed before coming to hospital?	
Does young person/child know not to wear make up on day of admission?	
Are any hair bobbles free of metal?	
Are pyjamas cotton, loose fitting and do they have plastic (not metal) buttons/fastening. Remember: Onsies should not be worn	
Have I/we packed slippers and dressing gown	
Have I/we packed toiletries (soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, towel)?	
Does the ward have my/our mobile number to contact me/us if we leave the ward whilst our child has surgery?	
Are there supplies of Paracetamol and Ibuprofen in the correct preparation for my/our child's age ready at home?	
Parents/Carers Remember to bring any medication that you may need to take during your child's admission. You may also wish to bring reading materials, drinks and snacks with you from home.	

Visiting hours

- Parents may stay with their child in hospital or visit at any time.
- **One** parent or carer is always welcome to stay overnight.
- Other adults may visit between 12.00pm and 8.00pm
- School children may visit after 4.00pm on school days and between 10.00am and 8.00pm at weekends and during school holidays.
- Children under the age of 16 years must be supervised by an adult at all times.

This space below has been left here for you to write down any questions you may wish to ask.

You can use the list on page 14 to check that you bring everything you and your child will need for their surgery and have followed the advice given in this leaflet.

If you are unable to attend a Pre-operative Clinic

Our Hospital Play Specialists work between 8.00 am and 4.00 pm Monday to Friday so if you are unable to attend the Pre-operative Clinic please telephone ward 3F on 0151 430 1616 to arrange a visit during these hours.

The Hospital Play Specialist will talk through the admission procedure, show you around the ward, and explain about going to the operating theatre.

Preparation day for admission

It is very important that someone with parental responsibility accompanies the child to hospital. Written consent is always required prior to surgery and other family members cannot sign for the procedure. A favourite toy, teddy or comforter/dummy brought to the ward often helps children cope with the unfamiliar hospital setting.

Additional needs

If your child has any additional needs such as special diets or any known allergies please inform the ward staff as soon as possible.

Medication

Please bring any medicine your child regularly takes to the ward on the day of admission and show them to the ward staff.

Why should my child not eat or drink before having an anaesthetic?

It is important that your child's stomach is as empty as possible as this reduces the risk of vomiting during and after the operation.

The nurses on the ward will discuss with you when your child should have his or her last food and drink before the operation.

Usually no food or milk should be taken for 6 hours before surgery but water can be given up to 1 hour before surgery.

Parents/Carers - Do not forget yourself

Remember to bring any medication that **you** may need to take during your child's admission. You may also wish to bring reading materials, drinks and snacks with you from home.

- Anti-emetic drugs: Anaesthetics could make your child feel sick or be sick, so he/she will be given medicine or an injection to stop this.

Please ensure you have a supply of Paracetamol and Ibuprofen, in a preparation appropriate to your child's age, at home. These medications are not routinely prescribed on discharge.

My Childs discharge story

Your child's nurse will begin planning your child's discharge home together with you shortly after admission.

How will I look after my child once they have gone home?

Discharge leaflets are available giving you advice on how to look after your child following their surgery, and how to manage their pain.

If you have any concerns please contact ward 3F on 0151 430 1616 and speak to the nursing staff.

Pain relief: Will my child be in pain?

While your child is asleep, pain relief is given to help make him or her as comfortable as possible after the surgery. The type and strength of pain relief given depends on the procedure or operation and this will be discussed with you beforehand.

A leaflet will be given to you on the ward about how your child's pain will be managed after the operation.

What type of pain relief medicines are available and do they have any side effects?

All drugs and treatments have potential complications but these methods are remarkably safe and are often used after children's surgery:

- **Suppositories:** Some pain killers like paracetamol can be given rectally (into the bottom). These are often given while your child is still asleep and last several hours. Suppositories are also very good for pain relief when children cannot take drugs by mouth or are feeling sick.
- **Local anaesthesia:** This is given by injection onto or near the nerves around the wound to numb the area of the operation. It is given while your child is asleep and the effect usually lasts for a few hours.
- **Strong pain killers:** Paracetamol and Ibuprofen are most commonly used to help make children feel more comfortable following surgery. This is given by mouth. Other pain killers can be given intravenously (into a vein) if your child cannot take medicines by mouth.

Fasting instructions

When children are to be admitted at 8.00am for a planned anaesthetic, nothing must be eaten after midnight the previous night. Your child may have a small drink of water but must finish this by 7.00am.

When children are to be admitted after 10.00am for afternoon surgery a light breakfast such as cereal or toast may be eaten before 7.00am. This is your child's last meal before their surgery.

Your child may then drink water freely until 12.00 noon after this time, no drinks allowed.

Please note: fizzy water and chewing gum **are not allowed** on the day of surgery.

What is a General Anaesthetic?

A general anaesthetic ensures that your child is fully asleep and free of pain during a test or operation. It consists of a combination of drugs given either as gas to breathe, or as an injection. General anaesthetics are given only by an anaesthetist.

Who are Anaesthetists?

Anaesthetists are specialist doctors who look after children before, during and after surgery. Their role is to ensure that children are asleep and safe throughout surgery and wake up comfortably at the end.

Why do I need to see an Anaesthetist before the anaesthetic?

An anaesthetist will see you on the wards to assess your child's general health and to discuss the anaesthetic.

For practical reasons this may not be your child's anaesthetist, but if you particularly want to meet him/her before your child goes to the operating theatre please ask the ward nurse.

The anaesthetist will ask you if your child has had an anaesthetic before, and whether he or she has any allergies. They will also discuss options for anaesthesia and pain relief medication.

What is Pre-medication?

Pre-medication, or a 'pre-med', is a medicine given to help ease a child's anxiety because of the type of surgery they are having. Many children do not need a 'pre-med'.

When used, a pre-med is given an hour or so before the anaesthetic, usually in the form of a liquid for your child to swallow, but occasionally it may be given by injection because of the nature of either the operation or the anaesthesia.

How safe is anaesthesia and are there any after effects?

Modern anaesthesia is very safe and complications are rare. The Anaesthetist is an experienced doctor who is trained to deal with any complications. Most children recover quickly and are soon back to normal after an anaesthetic, but some may suffer after effects. These can include headache, sore throat and dizziness.

Some children may feel sick and/or vomit. These effects usually last only a short time and there are medicines available to treat these effects if necessary.

Other complications may occur depending on your child's medical condition, the type of surgery and anaesthetic used.

If there are risk factors specific to your child these will be discussed with you beforehand.

What do I do while my child is having the operation/ procedure?

Many parents say that time seems to pass slowly while their child is having an operation. You could return to the ward with the ward nurse to wait, or you may prefer to go to the hospital restaurant or out for a walk.

It is important that the ward nurses know how to contact you in case anything needs to be discussed with you during the surgery and so that you can go with them to theatre to meet your child after their operation.

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Going for surgery

All jewellery, makeup and nail varnish should be removed before coming to hospital. Young ladies will also be asked to remove their bra before going to theatre for their operation, and if hair bobbles are worn they should not contain metal.

If your child wishes to wear their own pyjamas to theatre, they should be made of cotton material (not silky or synthetic material) and should have a loose fitting or button fronted top with no metal buttons.

Please do not wear one piece pyjamas (onesies). If your child wishes to walk to theatre they will need to bring slippers and a dressing gown with them. It is also advisable to bring all basic toiletries you and your child may require during your stay.

How will my child be given the anaesthetic?

Your child will either have an anaesthetic gas to breathe or an injection. Anaesthetic gas takes a minute or two to work.

The Anaesthetist generally cups a hand over your child's mouth and nose, or uses a face mask to give the anaesthetic gas. If your child is a toddler it may be possible to give the anaesthetic while your child is sitting on your lap.

If your child is having an anaesthetic by injection, 'magic cream' is put on the hand whilst on the ward about an hour before surgery. This numbs the skin so that a small plastic tube (cannula) and needle can be put into the vein.

The anaesthetic is injected through this cannula. At this point you will be asked to return to the ward with the ward nurse who has accompanied you to theatre.

Will I be able to stay with my child while they go to sleep?

Yes, **one** parent is very welcome to come to the anaesthetic room and you will be able to stay until your child is asleep. Once he or she is asleep you will return to the ward with the ward nurse.

What happens next?

Your child will be taken into the operating theatre.

The Anaesthetist will closely monitor your child's blood pressure, pulse, temperature and breathing throughout the operation, ensuring that he or she is safe and fully asleep.

When the operation is finished, your child will be transferred to the recovery room. The plastic cannula may be left in place but it does not cause more than minor discomfort.

What is the Recovery room?

This is a large room in the operating theatre suite where your child wakes up from the anaesthetic. Each child is closely looked after by a nurse until he or she is awake and ready to return to the ward.

The recovery room is a child friendly environment. Often a child does not spend very long in this area once awake, as they are transferred back to the ward as soon as possible on waking, to be with their family. The member of staff who collects your child from theatre will invite you to accompany them if you so wish.