Welcome to Children’s Hospital & Medical Center

This guide will help you and your child prepare for surgery at Children’s Hospital & Medical Center in Omaha, Nebraska. Before your child’s surgery, please read this guide carefully. Follow all instructions and pre-surgery tips. Please be prepared to provide requested information. Be sure to follow any other specific information given to you by your doctor.

Parking
Parents and visitors may park for free in the visitors’ parking garage beneath the hospital. Once you have parked, take the elevator to the Lobby.

Free valet parking is available at the hospital Monday – Friday from 5:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and at the Specialty Pediatric Center from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Operation Learn

Operation Learn is a pre-surgical program designed for children ages 3 to 8 and their families. The program allows families the opportunity to see what will happen when their child has surgery at Children’s Hospital & Medical Center. Families watch a video that walks them through the surgery process, the children participate in medical play and tour the surgical service areas. The program is facilitated by a Child Life specialist, who will address any individual questions and concerns. The program is free to any family whose child is preparing for surgery at Children’s. Programs are held weekly on Tuesday evenings. For patients outside this age range, individual preparation sessions are available by appointment.

You are encouraged to attend Operation Learn prior to your child’s surgery. For more information or to register, contact the CARES Child Life staff at 402.955.5309.
Prior to Surgery or Procedure
Contact your insurance carrier to ensure your child’s coverage.

You may be asked by your surgeon to have your child evaluated by his or her pediatrician prior to surgery in order to obtain a “History and Physical.”

Bring all pre-operative test results, a copy of the H & P, insurance card, and guardianship papers (if applicable) with you on the day of surgery or have this information faxed to the CARES Unit at 402.955.4730.

Pre-operative Instructions
A pre-op nurse will call you a couple of days prior to your child’s surgery to provide pre-operative instructions and obtain medical information (including your child’s current list of medications/doses). If you have questions or have not received a pre-op call, please call us at 402.955.4749. Notify your surgeon or the CARES Unit 402.955.4777 weekdays/5:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. if your child develops a cold, fever, rash, diarrhea, vomiting, or other signs of infection (including exposure to chicken pox) prior to surgery.

• A parent or legal guardian must accompany his/her child to the CARES Unit on the day of surgery.

• On the day of surgery, your child may take all scheduled medications with a sip of water and nebulizer treatments prior to surgery unless your doctor instructs you differently.

• No aspirin may be taken one week prior to surgery. (Check with your doctor to make sure that this is safe for your child).

• No non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs may be taken 3 days prior to surgery (e.g.: Advil, Aleve, Ibuprofen, Motrin, Naprosyn, Nuprin, Pediaprofen, or Toradol) unless directed otherwise by your surgeon.
Eating and Drinking Guidelines
For the safety of your child, it is important that he/she has an empty stomach before surgery.

Your child may have regular foods for the evening meal on the day prior to surgery. Please try to avoid spicy, greasy, or fried foods as they can cause nausea and vomiting during or after surgery.

Newborns to 1 year of age:
• No solids after midnight (no food, gum, candy, breath mints, etc.).
• May have formula or milk until 8 hours before scheduled time of surgery/procedure.
• May have breast milk 6 hours before scheduled time of surgery/procedure.
• May have clear liquids** until 4 hours before scheduled time of surgery/procedure.

One to 5 years of age:
• No solids, milk, or orange juice after midnight (no food, gum, candy, breath mints, etc.).
• May have clear liquids** until 4 hours before the surgery.

Five years and older:
• No solids, milk, or orange juice after midnight (no food, gum, candy, breath mints, etc.).
• May have clear liquids** until 4 hours before surgery.

**Clear liquids include: Sprite, 7-Up, water, Kool-Aid, popsicles, Jello (without fruit in it), broth, tea, apple juice, white grape juice, Pedialyte or Gatorade.

It is not necessary to wake your child to provide allowed pre-op liquids.

If your child eats or drinks after the instructed stop time, surgery may be delayed or canceled because serious complications could develop.

Call the CARES Unit immediately if your child accidentally eats or drinks after the instructed time: 402.955.4777.
The Night Before Surgery
Select comfortable clothes for your child to wear. Your child may wear his/her pajamas to the hospital. If your child has surgery on the abdomen, legs, buttocks, etc., dress in loose fitting clothes such as elastic waist shorts, jogging pants, or pajama bottoms.

Make arrangements for child care or after school pick-up/care for other siblings.

Pack your diaper bag/backpack with a few of your child’s favorite comfort items (blanket, stuffed animal, toy, and/or pacifier) and an empty sippy cup or bottle. Older children may bring small electronics of their choice.

Have your child remove all non-permanent dental appliances and rubber-bands, contact lenses, nail polish, all body piercings and metal-containing hair holding devices.

Please give your child a bath, as it may be a few days before they can bathe again, depending on the type of surgery your child is having. Also, bathing your child prior to surgery will help decrease the risk of infection.

Your surgeon may also ask you to give your child a bath using Chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG) wipes. Please follow the teaching sheet provided by the surgeon. This will be repeated on the day of surgery in the CARES unit.

Day of the Procedure
Please arrange coverage for the care and needs of siblings. Only two adults may accompany your child into the CARES Unit.

You and your child will be admitted to private accommodations in the CARES Unit. Other family members may wait in the surgery waiting area located in the lobby.

Please remember to bring your child’s car seat or booster seat for safe discharge home.

Prior to Surgery/Procedure
You will visit with your child’s anesthesiologist, surgeon, CARES nurse and Child Life specialist prior to surgery.
Child Life Services
The CARES Unit will provide Child Life services, advocating for the psychosocial, developmental, emotional and educational needs of your child.

Our Child Life staff will strive to create for your child a non-threatening, supportive, age-appropriate understanding of his/her hospital surroundings. Additionally, our Child Life staff will provide activities for your child while awaiting the surgical start time.

Recovery Phase
Your surgeon will speak to you in the CARES Unit once surgery is completed.

After surgery, your child will be transferred to the Recovery Room, being provided a minimum of 1-to-1 nursing. One parent may be at the bedside in the Recovery Room. As soon as your child is awake, he/she will be transferred to your CARES Unit room to continue recovery until discharge.

Going Home After Surgery
Written instructions will be given to you by your CARES nurse before you leave.

You may be given a prescription by the surgeon for pain control or infection prevention.

A CARES nurse will call you the next business day after surgery to follow up on how your child is feeling.

We’re Listening
Children’s has partnered with National Research Corporation (NRC), a survey expert, to better understand your experience with us. We strive to create an environment focused on the needs of our patients and families. If you receive a questionnaire from NRC by mail or email, we would appreciate your response. Your honest feedback will help us continue to grow and improve to fulfill our mission, “so that all children may have a better chance to live.”

REMEMBER TO BRING
- paperwork, including orders, lab results, x-rays, and/or History and Physical from your pediatrician’s office
- insurance card
- guardianship papers (if applicable)
- current medication list with name of medication, dose and time medications are given.
- comfort items such as a stuffed animal or toy, blanket, and/or pacifier for before and after surgery
- empty sippy cup or bottle with any special nipples
- small electronics
Staying Overnight

After surgery, your child may need to spend the night in the hospital. Your surgeon will inform you when your child will be able to leave the hospital. Your CARES nurse or Recovery Room nurse will escort you and your child to your inpatient hospital room once your child has recovered. Please remember to bring personal care items if you are staying overnight with your child (meal money, toothbrush, glasses, toiletries, etc.). One adult may stay overnight with your child in the inpatient hospital room. If additional accommodations are needed, please contact Rainbow House for room reservations at 402.955.7815.

Preparation Suggestions

• Prepare yourself. Write a list of questions or concerns to discuss with your child’s surgeon the day of surgery.

• Explain to your child why he/she is having surgery in simple, non-threatening words. Let your child know that the surgery is “a way to help them feel better.”

• Use simple, honest explanations to tell your child what will happen.

• Listen to your child’s questions and present simple answers.

• Read stories about going to the hospital.

Common Concerns: Birth to 1 Year

*Stress to infants can include the following:*

• Separation from parents

• Having many different caregivers

• Seeing strange sights, sounds and smells

• Disruption in normal routine

Children take cues from parents. The more calm and relaxed you are, the more relaxed your child will be also.

Common Concerns: 1 to 2 Years

*Preparation should take place one to two days before surgery*

Common stresses and fears:

• Being left alone

• Being in contact with unfamiliar people

• Painful procedures

• Medical equipment that looks and sounds scary
Common Concerns: 3 to 5 Years

*Preparation should take place three to five days before surgery to give your child time to ask questions*

Common stressors and fears:
- Thinking that he/she is in the hospital because they are in trouble or being punished
- Fear of having a part of the body damaged
- Fear of needles and shots
- Fear of waking up during surgery
- Fear of pain or the possibility of pain

Be patient with your child. It is normal for them to require more attention during this time.

Common Concerns: 6 to 11 Years

*Preparation should take place a few days to one week before surgery*

Common stressors and fears:
- Thinking that he/she is in the hospital because they are in trouble or being punished
- Having a part of the body destroyed or injured
- Loss of control
- Pain or the possibility of pain
- Needles and shots
- Dying during surgery

After sharing information, have your child repeat back what you have told them to see if they understand what is going to happen. This will give you the opportunity to clear up any misunderstandings.

Common Concerns: 12 Years and Older

Your child will want to be involved in deciding what happens to them and the kind of care that they receive. As much as possible, include your child in making decisions and planning for their surgery.

*Common fears and concerns:*
- Loss of control
- Lack of privacy
- Having a part of their body damaged or changed in appearance
- Fear of surgery and related risks

Your child may not want to admit they do not understand medical explanations. Make sure that your child is comfortable asking questions and that he or she fully understands what is happening.
Possible Temporary Post-op Behavior Changes
• acting younger (e.g.: bed-wetting or thumb-sucking)
• changes in eating
• having more or less energy than usual
• having new fears (e.g.: not wanting to sleep or being afraid of the dark)
• needing more attention or physical touch
• needing to talk about the surgery
• sleeping more than usual for the first few days

Help Us Help Your Child
• Attend Operation Learn (see page 3 for details).
• Please be actively involved in your child’s care and treatment.
• Keep your name band and your child’s name band on throughout his/her hospital stay.
• Communicate with your child’s caregivers.
• Follow eating and drinking guidelines (see page 5).
• Know and implement your child’s NPO (nothing by mouth) times.
• Know your child’s medications and doses.
• Hand wash often.
Frequently Asked Pediatric Anesthesia Questions

Does my child have to have an IV?
Most often, yes. It is usually placed after your child is asleep. It may be necessary to start the IV prior to going to sleep for your child’s safety. Your anesthesiologist will discuss this with you before surgery.

Will my child suffer from pain or nausea afterwards?
Pain and nausea may occur to varying degrees after many types of surgery. Medications can be given while the child is asleep or in recovery to minimize these symptoms.

Can I be present while my child goes to sleep?
This is not possible due to a variety of reasons related to hospital policy, safety concerns and logistical considerations.

Will someone be present to monitor my child continuously?
Absolutely! At least one member of our anesthesia care team is always present at the head of the table throughout the surgery. A minimum of 1-to-1 nursing care is provided in the Recovery Room.

How long will it be until the effects of the anesthesia wear off?
The effects of the anesthetic agents may last 24 hours. Use of narcotic pain medicines may add sleepiness during the surgical recovery.

Overnight Accommodations at Rainbow House

The Rainbow House offers an affordable “home away from home” for families needing overnight accommodations. To be a guest at the Rainbow House, your child must be admitted to or have an appointment at Children’s and you must live outside a 60-mile radius of Omaha. Only immediate family may seek accommodations at the Rainbow House.

All monetary donations are greatly appreciated. There is a suggested monetary donation per night but no one is turned away due to their inability to pay. You may make your donation using cash, check or credit card.

Please call 402.955.7815 or 800.642.8822 to reserve a room.
HOSPITAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Main Hospital: 402.955.5400
Admitting/Access: 402.955.5410
CARES Unit: 402.955.4777
Fax: 402.955.4730
Child Life: 402.955.5309
Rainbow House: 402.955.7815