

What to Expect After Your Child's Procedure

Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center offers information about what to expect after your child's procedure.

Recovery Period

- When the procedure is done, the doctor will come out and talk to you.
- Your child will still be asleep. Your child will go with the anesthesia staff to the recovery room, called the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU), to wake up.
- In the PACU, a nurse will be at your child's bedside for the entire recovery period.
- The nurse will keep your child safe and comfortable.
- The amount of time children spend in the PACU varies.
- We will make every effort to reunite you and your child in the PACU as soon as possible. We will reach you in the surgery waiting area to invite you to your child's bedside.
- Please do not hesitate to ask the staff in the waiting room for an update from your child's PACU nurse.

What You'll See in the PACU

- The PACU is an open room with areas divided by curtains to provide visual privacy for each family.
- We encourage each family to focus their attention on their child.
- Some children may be affected by the crying of other children. Please know we are working to comfort each child and family.
- One of our goals is to make your child comfortable. Often children are given medication to help decrease pain. We will work with you to measure your child's discomfort and provide treatment to reduce his/her pain. Speak with your nurse or doctor if you are concerned that your child is in pain.



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- Most children receive oxygen through a soft, clear mask for a while after anesthesia.
- Some children look pale, puffy or swollen after a procedure. This is normal.

Waking Up From Anesthesia

- Children wake up differently from anesthesia. In our experience, children often have a gentler and more comfortable time when they wake up on their own. Please do not wake your child.
- Some wake up quickly and may be awake before their families arrive at the bedside.
- Some children have an upset stomach and may vomit. Often children are given medications to help with nausea and vomiting.
- Some children may have dizziness.
- If a breathing tube is used during the procedure, some may have a sore throat.
- Some wake up shivering even though they are not cold. Encouraging your child to take deep breaths will help.
- Some children may have a very itchy nose from the medication. This itch will go away.
- Some children wake up restless or irritable. Some appear awake but are not aware of what is going on around them.

Some children cry, thrash, arch their back, reach out and they are not comforted by anything you do. This behavior is not usually related to pain, and children do not usually remember it. This restless or irritable wake up is known as “emergence delirium” (i-mur-juh-ns di-leer-ee-uh-m).

- It is very common and may occur in children of any age.
- Emergence delirium may be upsetting for you to see. It can last for a short time or may last up to an hour or longer. Stay calm, speak softly and remain at your child's bedside. You can be a comfort to your child.
- Your nurse will be at the bedside to reassure and support you in comforting and calming your child.



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- You and your child are welcome to stay in the PACU until this restless or irritable stage passes. In our experience, returning to a familiar environment often helps calm children. The best way to help your child may be to return to your hospital room or your car. Your child may calm down after the car ride home or a brief nap.

Contact the Colorectal Center at Cincinnati Children's

For more information or to request an appointment for the Colorectal Center at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, please [contact us](#).