

General Home Instructions

FOR AFTER SURGERY/PROCEDURE
AND ANESTHESIA



Readiness to Go Home

The amount of time it takes to be ready to go home varies from child to child. It is not necessary for your child to be fully awake and alert, or to drink, urinate or walk

Your child does need to meet these requirements before leaving:

- Breathing is safe
- Is arousable or awake
- Acceptable level of pain

Some children have additional requirements before going home. Ask your child's doctor or nurse.

Please inform us of any concerns you may have and let us know when you are comfortable and ready for your child's discharge from the hospital.

Activity When You Get Home

Your child may be drowsy and nap or sleep off and on for the rest of the day.

- Encourage quiet activities: reading, watching television, or playing video games
- Gradually increase permitted activities as your child's sense of balance returns

Preventing Falls After Anesthesia

All children who receive anesthesia are considered at an increased risk for falls. Your child's sense of balance may be unsteady for 24 hours. The risk for falls continues while your child takes medicine that contains narcotics.

Watch your child's activities closely.

To keep your child safe we recommend:

- Support walking or crawling while your child is unsteady
- Assist around furniture or other sharp edges
- Assist going up or down steps
- Prevent climbing
- No biking, sports or driving
- Use mobility aids if ordered by your doctor

What to Drink and Eat at Home

There is no rush to eat or drink. As your child wakes up, his/her appetite will gradually return. Fluids will help maintain your child's hydration. Fluids also may help with fever and pain control.

- Offer clear liquids such as water, soft drinks, juices, Kool-Aid®, Gatorade®, popsicle
- Advance to light foods such as soup, crackers, dry cereal and formula
- After light foods are tolerated, advance to regular foods and milk

Sometimes nausea and vomiting can happen after anesthesia.

If your child experiences some vomiting, wait a little while before attempting clear liquids again. Then advance slowly to regular foods.

How to Care for Pain, Discomfort or Fever

Your child may have some pain or discomfort, or run a low-grade fever (less than 101.5° F) following the surgery/procedure. Another common temporary side effect after anesthesia is a sore throat or hoarse voice.

Most pain, discomfort or fever can be decreased so that your child is comfortable enough to rest. Some things that may help your child be more comfortable include:

- Provide a pain reliever/fever-reducing medicine, if recommended by your physician
- Gently offer your child reassurance by holding, or rocking your child, or rubbing your child's back
- Offer cool fluids or popsicles to soothe a sore throat

Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) is available at a reduced rate at the Burnet Campus Pharmacy (Location B, first floor).

The pharmacy opens at 9 am Monday–Friday. Closing times and weekend hours vary.

How to Ease Behavior Changes and Anxiety

Some children show temporary behavior changes after a surgery/procedure. Your child may act younger or have new fears. Some children have changes in their mood or sleeping pattern. These changes may last for up to two weeks.

- Be patient and supportive; give your child time to adjust
- Return to normal routines and do familiar things to help your child feel secure
- Playing hospital, drawing pictures, reading books, scrap booking or journaling about the hospital experience may help

Call Your Surgeon/Doctor With Any Questions or Concerns

Please call if your child is having problems such as:

- Experiences excessive nausea or vomiting
- Does not urinate within 6 to 8 hours
- Runs a fever that will not go down with a fever-reducing product; has fever that lasts longer than 24 hours
- Shows signs of infection (swelling, redness, foul smell, drainage or prolonged fever)
- Experiences pain that is excessive and is unable to rest or sleep or be comforted
- Has more drainage/bleeding or swelling than you expected at the surgery site
- Is excessively sleepy, and you cannot wake your child easily
- Shows behavior changes that seem extreme or last longer than you expected

Important Phone Numbers

Hospital Operator 513-636-4200
Emergency Room (*Burnet Campus*) 513-636-4293
Emergency Room (*Liberty Campus*) 513-803-9740
Toll-free Number 1-800-344-2462

Burnet Campus

Same Day Surgery Nurses 513-636-4517
Post Anesthesia Care Nurses 513-636-3036

Liberty Campus

Same Day Surgery Nurses 513-803-9820
Post Anesthesia Care Nurses (*open till 6:30 pm*) 513-803-9850

To find out more information about your child's condition:

Family Resource Center 513-636-7606
Website www.cincinnatichildrens.org





www.cincinnatichildrens.org