

YOUR CHILD IS COMING TO HOSPITAL FOR AN OPERATION

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR THEIR OPERATION

There are a number of things you and your child can do to prepare for their surgery before coming to hospital.

- Be honest with your child and explain what will happen.
- Attend pre-admission tours.
- Read books/stories about having an operation.

Important points

- Your child should continue on any regular medications prescribed by your doctor.
- Your child should not take products containing aspirin (for example, Disprin) or ibuprofen (for example, Nurofen) for at least 14 days before their operation. Paracetamol may be used.
- Tell your surgeon when you meet about any medical problems. They may need to attend the pre-admission clinic for tests before their operation.
- If the surgeon has given you any instructions, please make sure you follow them; otherwise the operation may be cancelled or delayed.

PRE-ADMISSION TOURS

Children are usually scared about coming to hospital. Pre-admission tours of the Children's Ward can help ease their fears. Your child can see where they will be going, meet people who will look after them and even play with some of the equipment that will be used.

Call 4320 3436 to book a tour.

WHAT TO BRING

Parents

- Medicare card/ previous medical history details or Personal Health Record.
- Private health insurance card (if applicable).
- Current medications your child is taking.
- X-rays, pathology results (if they are related to your child's operation).
- Change of clothes.

WHAT TO BRING

Child

- Pyjamas that open with buttons at the front are preferred (no zippers).
- Toothbrush, etc.
- Slippers or shoes
- A favourite toy

Baby

- Infant formula
- Bottles and teats
- Nappies
- A favourite toy or any other comforter.

Important points

Please label all personal belongings. It is better to leave all your valuables at home. The hospital cannot accept responsibility for lost or stolen personal items.

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

- You will receive a letter with the admission date.
- A nurse from Children's Ward will contact you the day before your child's operation to confirm all the details.
- On the day of your child's operation you will need to go to the Surgical Admission Centre at Gosford Hospital (located on level 5).
- Once you have completed the required paperwork in the Surgical Admission Centre you will be directed to the Children's Ward.

Cancellation

There is a chance your child's operation may be cancelled or delayed if there are other patients who require an emergency operation. You will be kept informed of any changes as soon as possible.



FASTING

Having an empty stomach before an operation is very important. If it is not empty during the operation food or liquid could go into the lungs.

You will be advised by nursing staff on children's ward the night before what the fasting times are. The following is a guide only

- No food or milk 6 hours before the operation.
- Your child may have clear fluids until 2 hours before their operation.
- Infants may be breastfed 4 hours prior to their operation.

ANAESTHETIC

Before your child's operation they will be seen by the anaesthetist, who will review your child's health and discuss the anaesthetic plan further.

Your child will go to sleep usually in one of two ways:

1. With an injection into the vein. Children over the age of 1 year will be given anaesthetic cream on their hands, to numb the area where the needle will be inserted.
2. With a mask blowing gas on their face. Children are encouraged to take a few big breathes through their mouth so it won't smell

The anaesthetist will decide on the best way to 'put your child to sleep'. They may also prescribe something to help your child relax prior to the operation. This is called 'pre-medication'. Talk to the anaesthetist about this if you think your child is very anxious.

THEATRE

You will be required to accompany your child to the operating theatre reception and remain with them until they go into the operating theatres. This is important as you may need to answer more questions.

One parent can accompany your child into the anaesthetic area while they 'go to sleep'. You will be asked to put on theatre clothes over your own clothes.

PARENTS WAITING AREA

Parents can choose to wait in the parent waiting area adjacent to operating theatres or the Ronald McDonald Family Room located in the Children's Ward.

Staff will give you an approximate wait time while your child is in surgery and will contact you in either of the waiting areas when your child's operation is complete.

RECOVERY

When your child wakes up in the recovery room they may be scared and sore. The staff will contact you as soon as you can come into the area. Staff monitor your child closely until they wake up and will give pain medication and encourage some deep breath and coughing, to help clear the lungs.

When your child is fully awake and comfortable your child will be transferred to the Children's Ward.

GOING HOME

On the Children's Ward you will be given instructions by the nurses and doctors about when your child can eat and drink, walk and shower.

The doctors and nurses will also discuss what you need to do to care for your child at home. They may talk about medication, care of the wound, when your child can return to school and organise any follow-up. They will also give you written information or pamphlets to take home with you. Please ask any questions you have.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Patient enquiries	4320 3248
Children's Ward/pre admission tours.....	4320 3436
Waitlist Co-ordinator	4320 2734