

JUST FOR TEENS

TIPS FOR SURGERY

preparing for surgery

- You may have lots of questions about your surgery – what it is, how it's done, why you need it and how long it will take to recover. Talk to your surgeon and parents: let them know what you are concerned about.
- For questions about what to expect on the day of surgery, you or your parents may call the Pre-Admission Clinic, Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at 403-955-7953.
- If you smoke, try to stop smoking for at least one week or even longer, before your surgery. Smoking, as well as using drugs or alcohol, can cause health risks that could make your surgery unsafe.
- If you are interested in taking a tour of the hospital, please call 403-955-5074.
- Take a shower or a bath, and wash your hair the night before or the morning of surgery. We ask that you remove all nail polish, makeup, earrings, rings or other body jewellery before coming to the hospital.
- It is important to follow the instructions you are given about when you should stop eating and drinking before your surgery.

The thought of having surgery can be overwhelming and scary. To feel more at ease about having surgery, know what to expect, visit our website and finally, **ask lots of questions!**

what to bring



- You can bring a portable music player, hand-held video games, magazines, DVD movies or a laptop to help pass the time. Ask the staff for a password to access the wireless network.
- We do have pillows, but you are welcome to bring your own.
- Housecoat or zip-up hoodie, and warm socks or slippers.
- Something from home for comfort – a journal, some music, a favourite stuffy (you can take this to the operating room with you).
- Loose, comfortable clothes to wear home.
- Hairbrush, hair elastics, contact lenses case and solution.
- Cell phone – this may not work well inside the hospital, but we have other phones you can use.

day of surgery



**DO NOT EAT
AFTER MIDNIGHT!**

- You will need to bring one of your parents with you on the day of surgery.
- Respecting your privacy is important to us. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to help you feel more comfortable.
- When you arrive, the nurse will ask you some questions about your health, listen to your heart and lungs and check your temperature, height, weight and blood pressure.
- You will be asked to change into hospital pajamas. You may keep your underwear on unless it needs to be removed for your surgery.
- If you wear contact lenses, you will need to remove them before going for surgery. You may find it easier to wear your glasses today.
- It is important to let us know if you smoke or if you have recently used drugs or alcohol. These can cause health risks that could make your surgery unsafe.
- Children of all ages come here for surgery, so your roommate(s) could range in age from a baby to another teen.

girls only

- When you change into the hospital pajamas, you will need to remove your bra.
- If you are taking birth control pills, you could miss a dose as a result of the surgery. Please call the Pre-Admission Clinic nurses at 403-955-7953 to discuss this or tell your nurse on the day of surgery.
- If you are having your period, we ask that you not use tampons on the day of surgery. Please use pads instead.



DID YOU KNOW?

For safety reasons, we ask you not to wear any items with metal, like hair clips or body jewellery (dental braces are OK).

during surgery

- Your family can stay with you until it is time for you to go to the operating room. While you are having surgery, your family will be waiting close by in the waiting room.
- Before your surgery, a special doctor called an anesthesiologist will talk to you and your family. This doctor will give you anesthesia, which is medicine that makes you go into a deep sleep and prevents you from feeling pain or moving about during your surgery. Once your surgery is done, the doctor stops giving you anesthesia and you start to wake up.
- Teens usually receive this medicine through an intravenous (IV): a tiny plastic tube that is placed in the vein of the hand.
- During surgery, we will cover you with blankets to keep you warm. Only the body area the surgeon needs to operate on will be exposed.



DID YOU KNOW?

The anesthetic medicine keeps you asleep, prevents pain during surgery, relaxes your muscles, and blocks out the memory of the surgery.

after surgery

- As soon as your surgery is done, you will go to the recovery room or post-anesthetic care unit (PACU) where you will rest for a while. The nurses will monitor you closely during this time.
- When you wake up, you may find that you have a hoarse voice or sore throat. This is normal.
- Let the nurses know if you are sore or having pain. They can give you medicine to help manage your pain.
- You may have your IV for a while to give you extra fluids or medicine. Your nurse will let you know when you can start eating and drinking again.
- When you return to your unit, your family will be waiting for you. The nurses will let you know how long you'll need to stay in the hospital. This will depend on the type of surgery you had and how you are doing.
- If you need to stay overnight, one of your parents can stay with you. Friends are welcome to visit until 8:30 p.m. We may ask you to limit the number of friends visiting at one time.

DID YOU KNOW?

It is common to feel groggy, chilly, confused, nauseated, or even sad when you first wake up from anesthesia.

at home

- You should not drive for the first 24 hours after surgery, as you could be drowsy, dizzy, unsteady or uncoordinated from the anesthetic.
- Your doctor will let you know when you can go back to school or work or return to your usual activities.
- Avoid smoking as your body is trying to heal. Smoking can delay healing or increase your chance of getting an infection after surgery.
- It is important to follow the written discharge instructions the nurse has given you.



websites

- **Surgery at Alberta Children's Hospital**
www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/achsurgery
- **What's It Like to Have Surgery?**
http://kidshealth.org/teen/question/health_basics/having_surgery.html
- **Anesthesia – What to Expect**
www.kidshealth.org/teen/your_body/medical_care/anesthesia.html
- **Anesthesia Basics**
www.kidshealth.org/teen/your_body/medical_care/anesthesia_basics.html
- **Spotlight on IVs**
www.ivs.starlightprograms.org
- **Healthrock**
www.healthrock.com
- **Bam! Body and Mind**
www.bam.gov
- **Hospital for Sick Children**
www.aboutkidshealth.ca

This is for information purposes only. It should not be used in place of medical advice, instruction and/or treatment. If you have questions, speak with your doctor or appropriate healthcare provider.