

Greenwich Hospital

What is the preoperative process for my child?

PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

What happens before we come to the hospital?

You will receive a call prior to the day of your child's surgery from one of the pediatric nurses. During this call, the nurse will verify the time of surgery, the time you are to arrive at the hospital, and she will provide you with any other additional information specific to the individual needs of your child. In most instances, your child will not be allowed to eat or drink anything after midnight before the surgery. If your child's surgeon requires any preoperative bloodwork or tests before the surgery, this should be arranged prior to the actual surgery date.

During the call with the pediatric nurse, use this opportunity to ask any questions that you may have. You may even want to make a list of questions as you think of them to help you to remember to ask the nurse while on the telephone.

When you come to the hospital, you may want to bring a comfort item for your child from home, such as a favorite blanket or stuffed animal. Encourage your child to ask any questions he or she may have to help alleviate fears.

What happens when we arrive at the hospital?

You will be asked to arrive at the hospital one and a half hours before the scheduled time of surgery. This is to allow sufficient time to register at the hospital and to help your child to get settled in the pediatric unit prior to surgery.

Free visitor parking is located in the hospital parking garage on Perryridge Road. When you enter the hospital visitor parking garage, park on the right-hand side under the Helmsley Medical Building. Take the garage elevators to the Helmsley lobby. Once off the elevators, go to the front information desk for assistance to the ambulatory surgery area to register your child.

Once your child is registered, you and your child will go to the pediatric unit on the second floor of the Watson Pavilion. You will go to pediatrics whether your child is having same day surgery or is staying overnight.

One of the pediatric nurses will show you to your child's room. A health history will be taken and the nurse will help your child to put on a hospital gown. The nurse will also orient both you and your child to the room and surroundings.

What happens after we are settled in the room?

Your child may need to have an intravenous (IV) catheter started before going into the operating room. If this is needed, a nurse will put the IV in your child's arm. To do this, the nurse will insert a needle and thread a small, thin catheter into a vein. The purpose of the IV is to:

- Provide fluids for your child since eating and drinking is not allowed prior to surgery.
- Provide access to administer medications before, during and after surgery.

Once inserted, the catheter will be secured with tape. The insertion of the IV may be slightly uncomfortable, but the discomfort does not last. Sometimes bruising may occur at the needle insertion site.

At the scheduled time, your child will be brought to the holding area of the operating room, which is also on the second floor. You will meet with the anesthesiologist here who will be in the operating room with your child. One parent may accompany a child into the operating room. Once your child is asleep, you will be asked to wait in the waiting room area.

What happens once the surgery is finished?

Once the procedure is finished, your child will be wheeled into the recovery room and you will be called to go into the room. The anesthesia medication used during surgery will make your child feel groggy and sometimes a little disoriented. Sometimes the anesthesia causes nausea. If your child is in pain, medications will be provided for pain relief. Once your child is awake, you and your child will return to the pediatric unit.

Depending upon the surgery, your child will be given some clear liquids to drink. The diet will be advanced to solid foods as tolerated. If going home the same day, your child will be discharged when fully awake and tolerating fluids. If staying overnight, your child will stay on the pediatric unit. One parent may stay overnight in pediatrics.

Discharge instructions will be written by the surgeon specific to your child's surgery. The nursing staff will review these instructions with you. When you get home, it is important to call the surgeon's office to make a follow-up post-surgery appointment. A nurse from the pediatric unit will call the following day to check on your child's progress.

If you have any questions once you are home, you can contact either the surgeon's office, or you can call the nursing staff on the pediatric unit at (203)863-3553.

For more Patient Fact Sheets, see the Greenwich Hospital web site at www.greenhosp.org and Click on Patients & Visitors, then Patient Education