

Parent to Parent: Preparing & Coping with your Child's Surgery



Before Surgery Day

Remember to ...

- Pack up:** Families may bring comfort items, toys, books, electronics, and chargers from home, in addition to any personal items they may need during their time at the hospital. Familiar, favorite items can help children feel more comfortable in a new setting.
- Prepare:** Prior to surgery day, you will receive a phone call, MyChart message, or packet with information about what time to arrive, where to go, and anything else you need to do to be ready for surgery day.
- Find additional support:** **Child Life Specialists** build relationships with children, teens, and families to help reduce the stress of hospitalization and increase coping. They provide opportunities for play and self-expression during health care encounters as well as provide support during hard parts of being in the hospital.



A child life specialist may be able to help if your child is:

- feeling anxious about having surgery
- has questions about what to expect on surgery day
- has sensory/coping needs that you'd like to let staff know about before you arrive

You can contact the surgical Child Life Specialist by email, childlife@jhmi.edu or phone (410) 955-9652.



On Surgery Day

Arrival Time _____

Arrival Location _____

Stop Food at _____

Stop Clear Liquids at _____



- Speak with the care team:** You will meet all the providers who will be caring for your child during the procedure. A **Clinical Customer Service Coordinator (CCSC)** can help answer any questions or concerns you have about the hospital.
- No food or drink:** Because food and drink are not permitted in the waiting area, they can be found on the Main level at either The Daily Grind or the main cafeteria.
- Get the App:** Download the free Johns Hopkins Find my Way app from the app store, which can help guide you to these locations.

JOHNS HOPKINS
FIND YOUR WAY MOBILE APP
Scan this QR code to download the app
hopkinsmedicine.org/findyourway



Manage Anxiety:

- Your child's care team consists of physicians, nurses, and a child life specialist. **They can partner with you and your child to create a safe coping plan** to help manage possible anxiety surrounding surgery, anesthesia, and hospitalization.
- Our team will prepare your child for what to expect, offer activities to provide comfort, and provide emotional support through the Perioperative process.
- Your child's anesthesiologist will discuss the safest way to get your child to sleep, which may include relaxing medications before moving to the Operating Room.

Remember to sign up for updates from the Operating Room at the Registration Desk and to follow the tracking board in the waiting area.

Self-Care:

- We know that the waiting is the hardest part. We encourage you to use this time for a little self-care.
- Visit the Interfaith Chapel on the Main Level for a quiet place to regroup while you wait. The entrance is near the security desk across from the Cardiology Clinic. Please know that spiritual support is available upon request.

After Surgery:

- Once surgery is complete, you will be brought to your child as soon as possible. Your child's doctor will also speak to you to share information on the surgery and the next steps.
- It is common for children to be tearful, groggy, and uncomfortable after surgery. Your child's nurse will guide you through how to comfort your child in the recovery room (PACU).
- If your child is going home after surgery, you will be given a packet of discharge information that will inform you about what to expect following your child's procedure. This will include a phone number to call in case of emergency and the next time your child is scheduled to receive medication, if appropriate.

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