DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOR CLEFT PALATE REPAIR

GENERAL
PACIFIERS SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR 3 WEEKS, as their use may disrupt the stitches or the repair.

ACTIVITY
Arm cuffs with velcro (No-No’s) will be secured at the time of surgery, and should be worn AT ALL TIMES for 3 weeks following surgery, as it is important that fingers and toys stay out of the mouth. Your child may otherwise resume normal activities.

DIET
After surgery, continue the same feeding method that your child was using before surgery.
A soft diet may be offered, including baby food, foods pureed in a blender, or foods mashed with a fork. Hard candy or crunchy foods such as cookies, dry cereals or crackers should NOT be offered, as these can disrupt the repair.
Avoid breads, soft cheese and peanut butter, as they may stick to the roof of the mouth.

WOUND CARE
The mouth is generally resistant to infection. The saliva will dissolve the sutures, which will fall out in 3 to 4 weeks. You may notice the ends or “tails” of the stitches in the roof of the mouth.

PAIN MANAGEMENT
Mild to moderate pain is expected with the procedure. During your child’s hospitalization, the pediatric pain team will work to ensure your child’s comfort. A prescription for oral pain medication will be given at the time of discharge. For safety, the medication dose is based your child’s weight and should be given as instructed.
**FOLLOW UP VISITS**

Your child should return to clinic for a routine follow up visit 4 weeks after surgery. Please call 443-997-9466 to schedule a postoperative appointment on a Monday. Your child should return to Cleft Clinic when your child is 15-17 months of age for routine evaluation by plastic surgery, speech, genetics, dentistry, ENT, and hearing.

**CONCERNS/CONTACT NUMBERS**

During office hours, call 410-955-9475 or 443-997-9466 for persistent fever (greater than 101 degrees), excessive drainage or bleeding, difficulty breathing, difficulty eating or food refusal, excessive crying, irritability or complaints of pain. Kim Seifert, R.N. (kseifert@jhmi.edu) is typically available to review non-urgent questions or concerns.

After office hours, call 410-955-6070 and ask for the resident on call for plastic surgery to be paged. In the event of an emergency, call 911.