

Pre-Surgical Checklist for Parents

BEFORE YOUR CHILD'S SURGERY (WEEKS AHEAD)

- ☐ Talk with the surgeon without your child present to get all the information you need about the procedure
- ☐ Inform your child's care team of any medical conditions, problems with anesthesia, medications, and allergies
- ☐ Complete all pre-admission testing as ordered for your child (blood work, X-rays, EKG, etc.)
- ☐ Verify your child's insurance coverage and check if pre-authorization is required
- ☐ Find out if there are preadmission programs for children to help them prepare for surgery.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD'S MEDICAL TEAM (WEEKS AHEAD)

- ☐ What should my child eat or drink before surgery, and when should they stop?
- ☐ What medications should my child take or avoid before surgery?
- ☐ How will you separate my child from me, and will I be able to hold my child until the medicine takes effect?
- ☐ Can I be present during the beginning of anesthesia and in the recovery room?
- ☐ What should I tell my child about surgery and anesthesia?
- ☐ What can my child expect after surgery, including pain, nausea, or vomiting?

BEFORE YOUR CHILD'S SURGERY (DAY BEFORE)

- ☐ Follow all instructions about eating, drinking, medications, and bathing

- ☐ Your child should get a good night's sleep before their surgery
- ☐ If age appropriate, have your child help pack a bag with favorite comfort/warm items for the surgery day
- ☐ Contact your care team if your child develops:
 - Fever
 - Cough, cold, or breathing problems
 - Vomiting or diarrhea
 - New rash or other illness

DAY OF SURGERY

- ☐ Do not give your child anything to eat. This includes candy and gum, or a drink other than that which is listed on the eating and drinking instructions
- ☐ Have your child take/skip medications as directed by their surgeon
- ☐ Dress your child in comfortable, loose-fitting clothing
- ☐ Bring all required documents and insurance information
- ☐ Bring your child's inhaler (if they use one)
- ☐ Set up comfort items (if allowed by the facility)
- ☐ Pack an extra blanket
- ☐ Be ready with a list of your child's allergies, medications and/or supplements
- ☐ Be honest about what will happen
 - Explain the purpose and use the right language
 - Telling your child that they are going to take a "nap" may raise fears later when the word "nap" is used with your child. Instead, tell your child, "You will be given medicine to make you sleep so it won't hurt when the doctor fixes your ____"
- ☐ Prepare your child for what to expect
 - Use comparisons, play, and reassurance
- ☐ Avoid threats and stay positive while keeping a calm, supportive tone
- ☐ Be present and manage your own emotions