

## Preparing for Your Child's Surgery

Your child is booked for surgery at the Alberta Children's Hospital  
2888 Shaganappi Trail NW  
Calgary, AB T3B 6A8  
403-955-7211

Date of Surgery or Procedure: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Surgery or Procedure: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Surgeon: \_\_\_\_\_

Surgeon's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**[www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/achsurgery](http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/achsurgery)**

Visit the Alberta Children's Hospital (ACH) website to help your family prepare for surgery. There is information on how to prepare for surgery, what to expect on the day of surgery, and how to care for your child at home. You will also find a photo tour about what happens on the day of surgery, tips for teens, questions about anesthesia (the sleep medicine), and advice on how to tell your child.

Of the many children who come to the Alberta Children's Hospital for their surgery, most are able to go home on the same day of their surgery or procedure. Others are admitted the day of surgery. They may stay for one or more days, either on the Short Stay Surgical Unit or on an Inpatient Unit. Your surgeon will tell you how long your child will need to be in the hospital.

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## **In the Weeks Before Surgery**

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The Pre-Admission Clinic (PAC) staff will phone you 1–2 weeks before the surgery to go over your child's health history, give you instructions on getting your child ready for surgery, and answer any questions.

Do not give your child medicine that has aspirin in it (like ASA, Aspirin<sup>®</sup> or Asaphen<sup>®</sup>) or ibuprofen (like Motrin<sup>®</sup> or Advil<sup>®</sup>) **10 days before surgery**. Please call PAC at 403-955-7953 if you have any questions.

Plan to have your other children stay with family or a friend on the day of surgery, as it can be a very long day for them. If this is not possible, Emily's Backyard, on the main level of the hospital offers free childcare. Space is limited, so please call 403-955-2500 or email [eby@calgaryhealthregion.ca](mailto:eby@calgaryhealthregion.ca) to book ahead.

We ask that at least one parent be with your child on the day of surgery. If your child is staying overnight, one parent is welcome to stay at the bedside. Your surgeon will tell you how long your child will need to stay home to recover. This will help you plan for days off work.

## **Special Information**

If for any reason, you need to cancel or postpone your child's surgery, please call your surgeon. If it is within 24 hours of the surgery, you will also need to call the Short Stay Surgical Unit at 403-955-7856.

For health situations, it is important to use a certified healthcare interpreter. If you need a certified healthcare interpreter for the day of surgery, ask your surgeon's office to call 403-955-1199 to arrange for an interpreter. You can also call the Pre-Admission Clinic at 403-955-7953.

If a yellow band is put on your child's wrist after blood work is done, please **do not take it off**. If it is taken off, your child will need to have another blood sample taken before surgery.

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## **The Day Before Surgery**

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### **Call the Hospital**

Call the hospital the **day before** your child's surgery to find out what time you should be at the hospital. Please call 403-955-7856 between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. If your child's surgery is on a Monday, or if Monday is a holiday please call on the Friday before. We ask that you arrive on time. This gives the nurses enough time to get your child ready for surgery and work around any schedule changes.

Please be at the hospital at: \_\_\_\_\_

## Instructions about Eating and Drinking

When you call the hospital, you will also be told when your child needs to stop eating or drinking before surgery.

**It is very important that you follow these instructions carefully.** Your child's stomach needs to be empty before he or she is given anesthesia (sleep medicine). Your child **cannot** even have gum or candy on the day of surgery. If your child has something to eat or drink by mistake, the surgery may have to be delayed or cancelled.

The guidelines used are listed below:

- **Normal Diet** - your child can eat his or her normal diet until midnight, the night before surgery. This includes solid foods, formula, milk, breastmilk, and all juices.
- **Fluids** - After midnight, your child can only have certain fluids. We will tell you what fluids your child can have and what time your child can have these fluids until:
  - ☐ Breastmilk – finish the last feed at \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☐ Formula – finish the last feed at \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☐ Apple juice, water, or ginger ale – finish the last drink at \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions, please call 403-955-7856.

## If Your Child Becomes Sick

If your child has a fever, cough, or flu symptoms within 1–2 days of surgery, please call your surgeon. If your child is sick within 24 hours of the surgery, please call the Short Stay Surgical Unit at 403-955-7856 to speak to a nurse. If you reach our answering machine, please leave a message.

You may be asked to still come in on the day of surgery. The doctor that gives your child the anesthesia (sleep medicine) will check your child and decide if the surgery should be postponed until your child is feeling better.

## Bath/Shower

Have your child take a bath or shower, including washing his or her hair the evening before, or the morning of surgery. Braid long hair or tie it back in a ponytail. Use only plain elastics (no metal clips). Your child will also need to take off all make-up, nail polish, and jewellery (including body piercings) before coming to the hospital. You will be told if your child needs to wash with special soap.

## Medication

The PAC staff will tell you what time to give your child any prescription medication(s) on the day of surgery. If you have questions about medications, please call 403-955-7856 to speak to a nurse. Let us know if your child is stopping or starting any new medication(s) before the surgery.

Please give medication(s) at: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **The Day of Surgery**

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### **Parking and Checking In**

There is lots of parking in the parkade, which is near the hospital's main entrance. A heated walkway connects the parkade to the hospital. There is disabled parking on each level of the parkade and in both of the outdoor parking lots. The outdoor lots are near the Emergency and Rehabilitation entrances.

When you arrive, please go to the Admitting desk near the main entrance to check in.

### **What to Bring to the Hospital**

- Loose, comfortable clothes for your child to wear home.
- Warm socks/slippers and a zip-up hoodie/housecoat to wear with the hospital pajamas.
- A comfort item for your child to take into the operating room (toy, blanket, or stuffed animal).
- Any special medications including inhalers, insulin, or heart or seizure medications.
- Any special medical supplies needed for things like G-tube feedings, trach care, or diabetes.
- Toys, books, or hand held electronic games, DVD movies, and portable music players.
- Any special bottle, nipple, or sippy cup your child likes, so it can be used **after** surgery.
- Your child's Alberta Health Care card.

Pack you child's things in a small suitcase or backpack. Please put your child's name on all of his or her belongings. Make sure you leave all expensive items and jewellery at home.

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### **When Your Child Goes Home**

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To help you care for your child at home, you will be given a sheet of written instructions. There will be information on what to watch out for, when to call your surgeon, medication, diet, activity, and/or caring for your child's incision. Before you leave, your nurse will go over these instructions with you. Please ask us about anything that you do not understand.

It is best to have two adults for the drive home, so one person can take care of your child. If you came by bus, please ask someone you know to drive you home. The staff can also help you arrange for a taxi. It is a good idea to have a container or re-sealable plastic bag with you in case your child feels sick on the way home.

Have pain medicine like Tylenol® or Tempra® for when your child comes home. We also suggest you have extra fluids such as soups, popsicles, and juices at home.

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### **Important Numbers**

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Admitting	403-955-7783	Outpatient Pharmacy	403-955-7303
Emily's Backyard	403-955-2500	Pre-Admission Clinic	403-955-7953
Family Support Specialist	403-955-3272	Short Stay Surgical Unit	403-955-7856
Hospital Switchboard	403-955-7211		

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*This material 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.*

# Family & Community Resource Centre

## SURGERY

Our experts' recommended resources for preparing your child for surgery

All resources are available at the Family & Community Resource Centre located at the Alberta Children's Hospital.



### BOOKS

#### **Franklin Goes to the Hospital**

*Paulette Bourgeois*

Introduces very young children to what it is like to be in the hospital. Portrays Franklin's experience of being hospitalized for surgery. Recommended for ages 3-8.

#### **Good-Bye Tonsils!**

*Juliana Hatkoff and Craig Hatkoff*

It is time for Juliana to have her tonsils taken out. With the support of her friends, her family, books and toys, she knows exactly what to expect. Recommended for ages 3-8.

#### **I Don't Want to Go to Hospital**

*Tony Ross*

The little princess has got something up her nose. Once persuaded to go to the hospital and the lump is removed and she returns home - she wants to go back to hospital! Recommended for ages 3-8.

#### **When Molly was in the Hospital: a Book for Brothers and Sisters of Hospitalized Children**

*Debbie Duncan*

This sensitive book shows the viewpoint of an older sibling of when her younger sister needs to go to the hospital for an operation. Recommended for ages 3-12.

#### **Your Child in the Hospital: A Practical Guide for Parents**

*Nancy Keene and Rachel Prentice*

This book written for parents offers advice from parents on how to cope with a child's hospitalization. With easy-to-read tips on preparing your child and handling procedures without trauma.



Many of these resources are also available at your local public library. Contact your librarian. Materials can be borrowed through inter-library loan.



## WEBSITES

[www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/achsurgery](http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/achsurgery)

Visit the Alberta Children's Hospital website to help your family prepare for an upcoming surgery. It has information for parents and children, answers questions and tells you what to expect and how to prepare.

[www.kidshealth.org/parent/system/surgery/hosp\\_surgery.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/system/surgery/hosp_surgery.html)

Preparing your child for surgery from AboutKidsHealth is an excellent resource for parents to help guide preparing their child for surgery with links to additional information on specific surgeries.

[www.cas.ca/anaesthesia/](http://www.cas.ca/anaesthesia/)

The Canadian Anesthesiologist's Society is the site to go to for answers regarding your anesthesia. Check out the FAQ's and the Information for Patients brochure for more general information.



## CD'S

### **The Magic Seed: Courage**

*MindWorks for Children*

This guided imagery CD with Dr. Roxanne Daleo helps children from preschool and up to develop courage and face their fears.

### **Magic Island: Relaxation for Kids**

*Betty Mehling and Max Highstein*

Using music and narration this guided imagery CD helps children ages 4 and up learn how to release tension and relax themselves.

**Additional Resources or Information:** For additional resources or information regarding your child health information needs contact the Child Health Information Specialist at 955-7745; or email [childhealthinfo@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:childhealthinfo@albertahealthservices.ca); or visit

### **Family & Community Resource Centre**

Alberta Children's Hospital, 2888 Shaganappi Trail NW, Calgary, Alberta T3B 6A8  
Phone: (403) 955-FCRC (3272) Toll Free: 1-877-943-FCRC (3272)

Or call the Preoperative Assessment Clinic at (403) 955-7953.

**Our Clinical Experts:** Alberta Children's Hospital: Child Life – Day Surgery & Preoperative Care, Surgical Services, Preoperative Assessment Clinic, Acute Pain Service.

**Disclaimer:** This material is designed for information purposes only. It should not be used in place of medical advice, instruction and/or treatment. If you have specific questions, please contact your doctor or health care professional.



All of our Information Prescriptions are available for free  
download at: <http://fcrc.albertahealthservices.ca/publications.php>

## Emily's Backyard



Emily's Backyard is a playroom for patients and siblings of patients. Professional staff and volunteers engage children of all ages in fun activities in a safe and caring environment.

**Please call 955-2500 or email [eby@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:eby@albertahealthservices.ca) to register.**

Children may be pre-registered up to two weeks in advance. Maximum time limit is 1½ hours.

### Hours of operation:

**Monday to Thursday** 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
**Friday** 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

As space is limited for families requiring our service, please ensure we are notified of cancellations.

*This program is funded by the Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation*