



University Hospitals



Rainbow Babies & Children's

A Parent's Guide for Your Child's Surgery





Your child is having surgery.

At University Hospitals Rainbow Babies & Children's, we know it can be stressful when a child needs surgery. Knowing what to expect and how to prepare can help make the process go smoothly.

This guide to surgery was written with input from patients, families and staff. Please read this guide to help you and your family learn what to expect before, during and after surgery.

Thank you for choosing UH Rainbow Babies & Children's for your child's surgery.

Sincerely,

The Staff at UH Rainbow Babies & Children's

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About your child's surgery

Your child is scheduled for: _____

on: _____

with Dr. _____

Doctor's phone number: _____

at:

- Prentiss Surgery Center at UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital**
2101 Adelbert Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44106
- UH Ahuja Medical Center**
3999 Richmond Road, Beachwood, Ohio 44122
- UH Mentor Health Center**
9000 Mentor Avenue, Suite 220, Mentor, Ohio 44060
- UH Suburban Health Center**
1611 South Green Road, South Euclid Ohio 44121
- UH Westlake Health Center**
960 Clague Road, Westlake, Ohio 44145

The plan is for your child to:

- Go home the same day as surgery
- Stay in the hospital overnight after surgery
- Stay in the hospital for _____ days after surgery

Finding out when you need to arrive for surgery

The day before surgery, the surgeon's office will call you and tell you the scheduled surgery time and you may also preregister. Please note some surgeons may ask you to call their office for the surgery time. If you have not received a call by 3 p.m. the day before the surgery, call your doctor's office to find out what time to arrive.



Words of advice from experienced parents

- If you are ever unsure about what is going on with your child's care, ask questions.
- Don't forget to take care of yourself. If you are worried, upset or not getting sleep, it will be harder to help your child. Don't be afraid to ask friends or family for help. Talk about your worries with other adults, such as family, friends, a counselor, a member of the clergy or your doctor.
- Be as active as you want with the hands-on care of your child while he/she is in the hospital, such as helping to feed and dress your child. Talk with your child's nurse about how much you want to be involved.
- As the doctors come to see your child, ask questions about the care and treatment plan. It can be helpful to write your questions ahead of time in a journal or notebook.
- When you are under stress, you may need to hear the same piece of information more than once. Don't be afraid to ask staff to repeat things or explain them in a different way so you can understand.
- Plan on being at the hospital all day. Health care is complex and sometimes there are delays. Know that the staff is working hard to care for each child safely.

Planning ahead

Things you must bring on the day of surgery

- Photo ID of parent or legal guardian
- Health insurance card
- Name and contact info for all doctors who your child sees
- A list of your child's current medicines, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and herbal supplements
- Copies of guardianship or custodial papers, if applicable

What you need to know

- We do not allow children 12 years and younger to visit the recovery room. Please bring another responsible adult or arrange child care for any siblings.
- Because children are not allowed to eat or drink before surgery, we do not allow food or drinks in the waiting or preop areas.
- If your child is going home the day of their surgery, a responsible adult must stay with him or her for the rest of the day and overnight.
- It can be helpful to stock your home with some items for when your child returns from the hospital, such as popsicles, soup, fruit juice, soda and pain medicines like acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Motrin®). Stay away from items with red dye in them for the first 24 hours.



- Please leave items of value, such as jewelry and large amounts of cash, at home. We are not responsible for missing items and cannot replace them if they are lost.



How child life specialists can help your family get ready for surgery

Child life specialists are trained to help children and families understand and cope with getting care at a hospital. A child life specialist can help patients and families in these ways:

- Prepare children, teens and families for surgery and hospital experiences by explaining step-by-step in a developmentally appropriate way what to expect and what will happen while at the hospital.
- Support the emotional and educational needs of the patient, parents, siblings and other family members.
- Reduce stress and worry by providing distraction and promoting positive coping skills during medical procedures.
- Offer age-appropriate and safe play activities.
- Help patients develop ways to cope with fear, worry, separation and adjustment to the hospital, specifically with the surgery experience.
- Assist special needs patients and their families by making plans and strategies to help them cope with being in the hospital.

To learn more, call the child life specialist at 216-844-1312 before your child's surgery.

Planning for missed school

Tell your child's school that your child will be absent. Make plans with teachers to have assignments and books at home so your child can keep up with his/her schoolwork. Most kids often feel well enough to do routine schoolwork once they're home and getting better. If your child needs help catching up, talk with the school for guidance.

Touring the surgery area

We offer tours at some surgery centers, such as UH Ahuja Medical Center and the Prentiss Surgery Center at UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital. Taking a tour can help you, your family and your child better prepare. The tour is free and it takes about an hour.

On the tour, your family and your child will:

- Tour the waiting room, preop area, and recovery "wake up" room
- Learn what to expect on the day of surgery
- Get hands-on learning experiences using cloth dolls and real medical equipment that your child will see on the day of surgery
- Talk about anesthesia (sleep medicine) and what it is like to fall asleep for surgery

Tours are offered during the week, most often in the afternoons. To schedule your tour, call the Pediatric Surgery Child Life Specialist at 216-844-1312. Please give your child's name, age, the surgery he/she is having, and when you would like to schedule the tour.

The day before surgery

When to stop eating and drinking

For your child's safety, he/she must not eat or drink for a certain amount of time before surgery. If your child does not follow the guidelines listed in the chart below, the surgery may be delayed or canceled.

If your child is taking medicine, ask your doctor if it should be taken the day of surgery.

When your child must stop eating and drinking before surgery:			
8 Hours Before Surgery	6 Hours Before Surgery	4 Hours Before Surgery	3 Hours Before Surgery
Stop all solid foods, candy, gum and any liquids that you cannot see through OK to drink clear liquids (those you can see through) which include clear juice, broth, lemon-lime soda, Pedialyte®, ice and gelatin	Stop all formula	Stop breast milk	Stop all clear liquids Do not allow the child to chew gum or suck on hard candy

Bathing

Give your child a bath and wash his/her hair the day before surgery. Doing so helps prevent infections after surgery. If you were given any special bathing instructions from your surgeon, be sure to follow them.

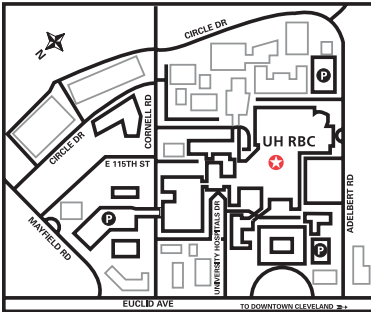
The day of surgery



Don't forget to bring the needed items for you and your child. Read the planning ahead section on page 6 for details.

Where to park

For surgery at UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital



Park in the Adelbert Road garage next to UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital, 2101 Adelbert Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44106.

The first two hours of parking is free, and then is charged by the hour. If you and your child are coming in for same-day surgery and going home afterwards, parking is free for one family member who will be driving the child home. Long-term passes can be purchased at a lower rate if you or your family needs to return for several visits. Visit or call the UH parking office for more details.

To call the Parking Office, call 216-844-7275. The office is located on the first floor of the Humphrey Building, Room 1629 (near Pre-Admission Testing).

Parking Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. weekdays

Valet parking is available 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. weekdays at the entrances to Lerner Tower and UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital.

If your child is having surgery at one of our community sites, parking is free.

When and where to check in

Arrive at UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital one and a half hours before the scheduled procedure time.

Check in at the reception desk on the first floor of UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital.

FAST-PASS visitor IDs

All parents, siblings, family and friends to UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital and Prentiss Surgery Center must be issued a special FAST-PASS ID. This ID must be visible at all times.

To get your FAST-PASS ID, show a current form of ID such as a driver's license, state ID, student ID or passport at the reception desk in the UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital main lobby.

The preop area (before surgery)

- On the day of surgery, your child will be taken to the preop area in the surgery center. Two adults can be with your child.
- In this area, you will speak with one or more of the doctors on your child's surgery team. They can give you a sense of how long the surgery will last. Please note that the surgery may take longer than planned.
- The preop nurse will ask some questions and make sure both you and your child are ready for surgery.
- When your child is taken to surgery, you will be asked to go back to the waiting area. If you leave the waiting area, ask the secretary for a pager and leave your cell phone number so we can contact you if needed. Cell phones do not work in all parts of the hospital, so if you leave, it is important that you also ask for a pager.

During surgery

- The anesthesiologist gives your child medicine to help him/her sleep and ease pain, and monitors your child throughout the surgery.
- If you can, have something to eat and drink in the cafeteria while you are waiting. This can help you have the strength needed to care for your child later. We ask that parents and visitors not bring food or drinks into the waiting area.
- Please ask your doctor in the preop area if you can leave the waiting area. Some surgeries are very short and your child's surgeon may want you to wait in the waiting area.

The recovery room

- When the surgery is done, your child is taken to the recovery room. The recovery room is staffed by trained nurses who are skilled in caring for children after surgery.
- As soon as possible after surgery, you will be called into the recovery room. Only two adult parents or visitors are allowed. If you have other children with you, they will not be allowed into the recovery room. Please have another adult with you who can stay with the children while you are in the recovery room.
- It is common for children to be restless and confused for a short while after surgery. They may also feel sick or throw up (vomit), have some pain, a headache or sore throat. The nurse looking after your child can give medicine to help with these problems.
- Your surgeon will speak with you before you see your child or in the recovery room.
- If your child is going home the same day, the recovery room nurse gets him/her ready to go home. If your child will be admitted to the hospital, the nurse will help move your child to an inpatient floor.



Always ask questions or tell us if there is anything you are worried or unsure about during your child's recovery.

For parents and caregivers

Tips to help a child having surgery

You are the best person to help your child. While it may be hard at times, try to be calm and reassuring. Give frequent hugs and praise. Provide comfort and distract your child with stories and pictures. Other things you can do:

- **Be patient with your child.** Children may react to stressful events by crying, having temper tantrums, whining, clinging and acting out in frustration. These feelings and behaviors are common but often short-term.
- **Help your child understand what is going on.** Use simple words that he or she can understand. If your child needs to go through something that may be painful, be honest about the fact that it may feel uncomfortable, but also explain how it will help his/her body. Then talk with your child about ways to make the experience easier such as asking questions, sitting on a parent's lap or watching a movie.
- **Let your child talk about worries or feelings.** Remind your child that it's OK to be worried or cry, but also help him/her talk about feelings. Younger children are often better at expressing their feelings through play, drawing or story-telling. Listen to your child, and help your child know that these feelings are normal.
- **Help your child see the hospital staff as helpers.** Remind your child that the staff try very hard to help children feel better.
- **Encourage your child to ask his/her own questions to the doctors or nurses.** Young children may often be quieter in a strange setting. If they hesitate to ask questions, tell them that you can ask for them. It's important for you as a parent to have correct information, so please ask your own questions, too.
- **Take care of yourself.** If you are worried, upset or not getting sleep, it will be harder to help your child. Don't be afraid to ask friends or family for help. Talk about your worries with other adults, such as family, friends, a counselor, a member of the clergy or your doctor.
- **Tell us if your child has special needs.** If your child has special needs, we suggest you call a child life specialist to make a custom plan to help your child get ready for surgery. To learn more, call the Prentiss Surgery Center Child Life Specialist at 216-844-1312.



Things you will be glad you brought

- A phone charger
- Things to help pass the time, like knitting or books to read
- A list of your questions for the surgeon
- A comfort item for your child or teen such as small toy, blanket, iPad®, iPod® or books. If your child is going to spend the night in the hospital, a responsible adult must stay with him/her for the rest of the day and overnight.
- If you are staying overnight, pack any items you or your child might need, like a toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo and a change of clothes.

Helping your child cope with pain

Your child may be in pain or discomfort after surgery. We know that seeing this can be very hard for you. We may not be able to get rid of all pain with medicine, but will work with you to make your child as comfortable as we can. Good pain management can help your child's healing. There are many things you can do to help your child cope with pain such as:

- **Be your child's voice.** Some children will not tell their health care team about pain but will tell you. Tell your child's doctors and nurses if your child is in pain or uncomfortable.
- **Tell the health care team** what words and signs your child uses to tell you that he or she is hurting. Also tell them about pain control methods and medicines that have and have not worked in the past.
- **Ask for help** to manage your child's pain or discomfort. Speak with your nurse or ask to see the pain team or child life specialist.
- **Speak up** if your child's pain is not getting better or if it is getting worse.

Use a pain control technique such as:

- **Deep breathing.** Bubbles and pinwheels help children take deep breaths. With older children, teach them to breathe in deeply, hold for a few seconds, and then slowly breathe out through their nose.
- **Distraction.** Some useful tools include music, pop-up books, treasure hunt books, magic wands, 3-D books and movies.
- **Relaxation.** Music helps children relax. Give choices of music they like or, if your child is admitted to UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital, ask for a visit from a music therapist.
- **Play.** Play helps children cope and learn. Giving a chance to play before, during and/or after a stressful event helps children gain control. This helps lessen stress and worry and gives a safe way to show their feelings.
- **Turning and changing positions.** Try raising up their arm or leg with pillows. Older children may feel better lying on their sides with pillows behind their back and between their knees, to give support.

Your child may have pain or discomfort for many days after surgery. Trial and error may be the best way to find out what works well for your child. Please ask your nurse or doctor for advice if your child still has pain or if the pain gets worse.



Getting ready to go home

When your child is ready to leave, you will get a copy of the instructions for his/her care at home and any needed prescriptions. It's often helpful to get prescriptions filled at the pharmacy as soon as you can.

Before you leave:

- Review your child's home-going (discharge) instructions and prescriptions with his/her nurse or surgeon. Make sure you know what you need to do and get answers to all of your questions.
- Make sure you know who and what number to call if you have any problems, questions or concerns.
- Work with the care team to schedule your child's follow-up visit with the surgeon.
- Ask the care team to fill out any return-to-work or school forms that you or your child may need.

Once your child is home

Keep in mind that it may take a little while for things to get back to normal when you return home. A visit to the hospital is a big event in a child's and family's life, even if only for a day.

Shortly after the surgery, you may notice some changes in your child's behavior, such as new fears, bed-wetting, nightmares, clinginess, tiredness or changes in eating. These are normal reactions and are often short-term. If you are worried about your child's behavior changes, or they last longer than you thought they would, talk with your doctor.

Call your surgeon's office right away if your child has:

Signs of infection that may include:

- Fever higher than 102°F
- Redness, swelling, warmth, pain or firmness around the wound (incision) or any IV site
- New or more pain not helped by pain medicine
- Drainage from the wound that changes color, looks thick or cloudy, or smells bad

Other problems such as:

- New bleeding or bruising
- Not drinking for more than eight hours
- Not urinating
- Throwing up for eight hours or more or feeling sick to his/her stomach
- Pain, swelling, warmth or redness in his/her arm or leg
- Chest pain or a hard time breathing
- Any other concerns you want to talk about with your child's care team

Call your surgeon if you have any other problems or concerns about your child. If you do not have the surgeon's phone number, call 216-844-1000 to speak with the hospital operator. Ask for your surgeon's phone number to be connected with his or her office.

Call 9-1-1 if you have any problems that you think are an emergency.

Be sure to read your child's home-going instructions for more detailed information about his/her home care and follow-up plan.

*This info is a general resource. It is not meant to replace your doctor's advice.
Ask your doctor or health care team any questions. Always follow their instructions.*

*UH Suburban Health, Mentor and Westlake surgery centers are extensions of
University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center.*



216-UH4-KIDS | 216-844-5437 | UHRainbow.org