

GETTING READY FOR SURGERY – A GUIDE FOR TEENS



Hasbro Children's Hospital

The Pediatric Division of Rhode Island Hospital

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You know a lot about a lot of things, but you might not know a lot about surgery. That's okay because we're here to share what we know. Don't feel embarrassed about asking questions—the more you know about what happens before, during and after your surgery, the more comfortable you'll feel while you're at Hasbro Children's Hospital. We're here to answer all your questions and to make sure you feel better soon. If you have any questions, please call us at 401.444.6030.

PREPARING WITH POP

When your surgeon schedules your surgery, he or she should also make an appointment for you to come to our pre-operative program (POP). POP will help you understand the surgical process. POP gives you the opportunity to meet our operating room and recovery room staff and to become comfortable with the environment. At POP, our nurses and doctors can answer your questions about anesthesia and your upcoming surgery.

POP takes place every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday at 2 p.m. If an appointment hasn't been made for you, or if you're unsure of the date of your appointment, ask your parent or an adult family member to call your surgeon's office.

DO I HAVE TO?

Every day, lots of teenagers have surgery. Some of them have their tonsils or appendix removed and others have orthopedic surgery to set broken bones. Sometimes teens have surgery because they were hurt in an accident. Your surgeon will explain to you why you need to have your surgery.

HOW DO I GET READY?

We'll give you and your parent or your adult family member instructions on what you can and can't do before your surgery. For example:

- You won't be allowed to eat food on the morning before surgery.
- You can have clear fluids, like apple juice, water or a Popsicle, up until two hours before your arrival time.
- You can't wear nail polish or any jewelry (this includes body piercings) into the operating room.

CAN I BRING MY STUFF?

Make sure you pack some things to do. You might want to bring a book, a magazine, a hand held game or a portable music player with headphones. If you're staying overnight at the hospital, you can bring your own pajamas and slippers and personal care items like your toothbrush.

WHAT SHOULD I WEAR?

You should dress comfortably when you come to the hospital. Make sure not to wear any jewelry or nail polish. You'll have to change into the clothes we provide for you while you are at the hospital. You can keep your clothes and other personal belongings in a locker.

You and the adult who came with you will wear bracelets while you're at the hospital. These bracelets have your name on them. It's important to wear them until you go home.

WHO WILL BE THERE?

At Hasbro Children's Hospital, there are a lot of people who will take care of you. Here are some of the people you'll probably meet:

- Nurses are usually the first people you'll meet at the hospital. A nurse will get you ready for surgery and write down your medical information. He or she will also take your temperature, blood pressure and heart rate. There will be nurses in the operating room and recovery room with you.
- A surgeon is a doctor who performs operations. Doctors supervise the care you receive while you're in the hospital. Doctors also work with medical students who are training to be doctors. Depending on the reason for your surgery, you may be monitored by a specialist, a doctor with extra training for specific problems.
- An anesthesiologist is a doctor who specializes in giving medications that help you sleep during surgery or numb an area of your body so you don't feel the surgical procedure. The anesthesiologist stays with you during your operation to make sure you don't feel pain.
- A child life specialist is trained to talk to teens about medical procedures. He or she can help if you have questions about something or if you need extra support. Child life specialists also provide activities for teens while they're in the hospital.
- Interns are recent medical school graduates who assist in the care of patients.
- Residents are doctors who have completed their internships and are receiving advanced clinical training.



- You'll probably see other hospital staff members while you're here, such as central transport aides, who bring you to scheduled tests and treatments; technicians, who conduct tests such as x-rays and blood work; and respiratory therapists who provide treatments.

Our employees wear ID badges. If you don't know who someone is, please ask the person to tell you who he or she is.

WHY ARE THEY WEARING THAT?

When you're in the operating room, you'll notice that the nurses, doctors and the anesthesiologist are wearing masks on their faces and caps on their heads. They wear these clothes to prevent germs and dirt from getting into the sterile (germ-free) operating room. You'll also see computer equipment that's used to monitor your heart rate and blood pressure, and instruments the surgeon will use to perform your operation.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I GET THERE?

You should arrive at the hospital at your scheduled time with your parent, adult family member or guardian. Come to Room 210, and once you

check in, a nurse will ask you questions about your medical history, any symptoms or pain you may be having and when you last ate or drank anything. The nurse will also ask if you have any allergies. To keep you safe, it's really important that you're honest with the nurse. The nurse will also check your heart rate and temperature.

WHAT IS ANESTHESIA?

Before your operation, you'll have a chance to meet with your anesthesiologist. The anesthesiologist will give you medication to help you fall asleep or to numb the part of your body that's going to be operated on.

WILL I STAY OR WILL I GO?

Whether or not you have to stay overnight at the hospital depends on the type of surgery you're having.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER SURGERY?

When your surgery is over, you'll be taken to the recovery room. Here, nurses will look after you for a while. Your parents or the adult who came with you will be able to visit you in the recovery room.

When you wake up, you may feel sleepy or a little sick from the anesthesia. Let the nurses know, so they can help you feel better. You'll have an IV in your hand. An IV is a tiny tube that is put in your vein to give your body a drink and medicine when you need it. The IV is taped to your hand so it won't move. Your nurse will take it out when you don't need it anymore. You might have a bandage on the part of your body where you had your operation. It's important to keep the bandage on and to keep it dry.

When the anesthesia has worn off and you're fully awake, you'll be taken to a hospital room if you're staying overnight. If you're having outpatient surgery, nurses will monitor you in another room until you're ready to go home. For maximum effectiveness, your prescribed pain medication should be started before the local anesthesia wears off. It's important to take your medications on a scheduled basis, especially during the first 24 hours after surgery. Please follow the written instructions you're given and do not skip any scheduled doses. If you feel nauseated or if you have any pain when you're at home, let your parent or guardian know so he or she can help you feel better.

TIPS FOR TEENS

- Practicing healthy habits can help you recover faster and keep you feeling good.
- Smoking is never a good idea, but it's a really bad thing to do before surgery and after surgery when your body is trying to recover.
- Getting plenty of sleep is important so you can recover faster.

