

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.albertahealthservices.ca/achsurgery

Visit the Alberta Children's Hospital (ACH) Website to help your family prepare for surgery. There's 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'll 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 about the surgery.



Many children who come to the Alberta Children's Hospital for surgery are able to go home on the same day. Others are admitted to the hospital the day of surgery. They stay for one or more days 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.

In the Weeks Before Surgery

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

Don't give your child medicine that has aspirin in it (like ASA, Aspirin® or Asaphen®) or ibuprofen (like Motrin® or Advil®) for 10 days before surgery. 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. It can be a very long day for them. If this isn't possible Emily's Backyard, on the main level of the hospital, offers free childcare. Childcare spaces are 1½ hours maximum. Space is limited so call 403-955-2500 or email eb@ahs.ca to book ahead.

At least 1 parent should be with your child on the day of surgery. If your child is staying overnight, 1 parent is welcome to stay at the bedside. Your surgeon will tell you how long your child will need to stay home to get better. This will help you plan for days off work.

Special Information

If you need to cancel or postpone your child's surgery please call your surgeon. If it's within 24 hours of the surgery, you'll also need to call the Short Stay Surgical Unit (SSSU) at 403-955-7855.

If you have difficulty with English it's important to use a certified healthcare interpreter for health situations. The Alberta Health Services Language Line Interpretive Service is available in over 200 languages. Hospital staff can access the language line on the day of your child's surgery to help in your hospital stay.

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

The Day Before Surgery

Call the Hospital

Call the hospital the **day before** your child's surgery to find out what time you should be at the hospital. Call 403-955-7856 between 1:00 pm and 3:00 pm. If your child's surgery is on a Monday, or if Monday is a holiday, call on the Friday before.

It's important to be on time. The time that you're given to be at the hospital is not your child's surgery time. It is before your child's surgery time so the nurses have enough time to get your child ready.

Please be at the hospital at: _____

Instructions about Eating and Drinking

When you call the hospital, you'll 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 they are given anesthesia (sleep medicine). Your child **cannot** have even 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.

- **Normal Diet** – your child can eat their 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'll 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 _____
 - Apple juice, or water – 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 to 2 days of surgery call your surgeon. If your child is sick within 24 hours of the surgery, also call the Short Stay Surgical Unit directly at 403-955-7855 to let the unit staff know. If you reach our answering machine, please leave a message.

You might still be asked to 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 needs to be postponed until your child is feeling better.

Bath/Shower

Your child should take a bath or shower and wash their hair the evening or the morning before 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 jewelry (including body piercings) before coming to the hospital. You'll be told if your child needs to wash with a 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: _____

The Day of Surgery

There's lots of parking in the parkade 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.

When you get to the hospital go to the Admitting desk near the main entrance to check in.

What to Bring to the Hospital

- Your child's Alberta Health Care card.
- Any special medications including inhalers, insulin, or seizure medications.
- Any medical supplies needed for G-Tube feedings, trach care, diabetes, hearing aid, etc.
- Warm socks/slippers and a zip-up hoodie or 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 bottle, nipple, or sippy cup your child likes, so it can be used after surgery.
- Toys, books, or hand held electronic games, DVD movies, portable music players, tablets or cell phone.
- Loose, comfortable clothes for your child to wear home.
- If your child is scheduled to stay in hospital overnight please bring any personal care items that you might need for an overnight stay (feeding supplies, toothbrush, comb, etc.).
- If your child is breastfeeding, there is a breast pump available on the unit. Please bring your own pumping supplies or, if needed, supplies can be purchased at the Outpatient Pharmacy.

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

When Your Child Goes Home

To help you care for your child at home, you'll be given a paper with instructions. There will be information on what to watch for, when to call your surgeon, medicines, diet, activity and caring for your child's incision. Before you leave the hospital your nurse will go over these instructions with you. Please ask us about anything that you don't understand.

It's best to have 2 adults for the drive home so 1 person can take care of your child. If you came by bus ask someone you know to drive you home. The staff can also help you arrange for a taxi if needed. It's 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[®], for when your child comes home. It's a good idea to have extra fluids like soup, popsicles, and juice at home also.

Important Numbers

Admitting	403-955-7212	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 (SSSU)	403-955-7856
Hospital Switchboard	403-955-7211	Short Stay Surgical Unit Main Desk	403-955-7855

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, talk with your doctor or appropriate healthcare provider.