



Surgical Admission: What to Expect – Dallas Campus

Your child is scheduled to have surgery at Scottish Rite for Children. You will be given a lot of information and instructions during your stay. If you hear words that you do not understand, feel free to ask questions. The following information will help you know what to expect.

Before Surgery

Contact your clinic nurse if your child has any of the following in the six weeks before surgery:

- fever above 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- asthma flare or wheezing
- cold, cough, sore throat or flu-like symptoms
- exposure to a contagious illness, such as: COVID-19, flu, RSV, chickenpox, measles, mumps, whooping cough
- ear infection
- bug bites
- skin rash
- vomiting and/or diarrhea

Two weeks before surgery, your child should not take ibuprofen (MOTRIN®), aspirin, naproxen (Aleve®), herbal medications or supplements (such as fish oil, vitamin E, and energy drinks) to avoid potential bleeding problems. You may give your child acetaminophen (Tylenol®) if needed. Do not give your child BC Powder®, as it contains aspirin.

Contact your clinic nurse to discuss:

- All current medications and supplements your child is taking.
- Any changes in your child's medications before surgery.

Tests - Your child may need examinations or tests before admission. These may include lab work, X-rays or breathing tests.

Skin Care to Prepare for Surgery - Skin bacteria are the most common cause of infections after surgery.

- Preparing or "prepping" skin at home just **before** surgery can reduce the number of bacteria on the skin, which can reduce the risk of infection at the surgical site.
- We will give you packets of special moistened cleansing wipes to use, which contain Chlorhexidine Gluconate (CHG) antiseptic solution.
- See "Skin Care to Prepare for Surgery" that came with your wipes for more information.

Preoperative (Pre-Op) Appointment Day

- If you have a preoperative appointment, check in at the Main Entrance on the first floor, and you will be directed to your appointment.



Preparing for Surgery Day

After surgery you will be assigned a room on the Inpatient Unit.

Please see a list of items below that you may want to bring to Scottish Rite so that your child has everything they need when they are finished with surgery.

- All of your child's medications in original containers, including all herbal and nutritional supplements and over-the-counter medications. All medication, supplements and over-the-counter medicines will be given to the pharmacy and then dispensed by a nurse.
- If you use formula (infant or for G-tube) to feed your child, bring enough formula for the entire stay. Scottish Rite *does* have stock formula you can substitute for your child's formula, but we do not carry all formula brands.
- All special equipment such as braces, crutches, wheelchair, walker, BiPAP, communication device, G-tube (extra button & extension set), tracheostomy tube supplies (extra trach tubes).
- Athletic or closed toe shoes- tennis shoes or loafers.
- Favorite pillow, blanket, toy or comfort items, all labeled with your child's name.
- School assignments or books to work on while at Scottish Rite.
- Personal care and hygiene items (comb, toothbrush, feminine pads, etc.).

Visiting the Inpatient Unit - There are no limitations on the number of visitors; patient-specific restrictions may be appropriate depending on the patient's diagnosis and/or procedure that is planned. Your child's clinic team and Inpatient staff will be available to assist with any questions.

- Visiting hours are 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- **One family member/guardian** may spend the night. Contact Family Services for other options.

ID Bracelets - We will give your child an identification bracelet that they must wear at all times for proper identification.

Vital Signs - The nurse will check your child's vital signs several times a day: temperature, heart rate, breathing and blood pressure. These signs tell us about your child's health, response to treatments or possible problems.

Nothing by Mouth (NPO) - The doctor will order no food and drinks to be sure the stomach will be empty before surgery. Nothing is allowed by mouth after this time, not even water or gum.

- Your child's stomach needs to be empty, so they do not throw up in surgery and get vomit into their lungs.
- Parents and visitors should not bring food or drinks into the child's room during this time.
- Sometimes the doctor will write a special order for medications to be given by mouth.

Sleep Patterns - Your child's sleeping habits at Scottish Rite may be different due to being away from home.

- Personal items from home, like a blanket or stuffed animal, may help your child adjust to the routine.
- After surgery, your child may sleep and wake at unusual times because of medication, changes in routine or pain. Sleep patterns will slowly return to normal.



The Day of Surgery

Please be sure to arrive on time so that your child can be prepared and taken to surgery as scheduled.

- Before surgery, the nurse will take vital signs and make sure all jewelry, watches and contact lenses are removed.
- The nurse will ask your child to go to the bathroom (or apply a dry diaper).
- The doctor will write on your child's surgical site with a special marker before they go to surgery.

Preoperative Medication - Sometimes the doctor will order medications to be given before surgery.

- Some medications relax the child, while others keep the stomach from becoming upset.
- Medications may be given by mouth or through an IV (intravenous line).

Special Clothing - Special gowns are supplied to everyone going to surgery, so underwear should be removed. Children without bowel or bladder control will wear diapers.

The Trip to Surgery - Your child may go to and from surgery on a special bed, or gurney. (The two designated caregivers may go with the patient to the pre-op room.)

During Surgery

You will be given a reference number to use to follow your child's progress through surgery. In the Surgery waiting area, a screen will display this number and the current stage of your child's surgery. You will be updated through a phone call if your child's surgery takes more than an hour and a half. If you miss the call, please do not try to call back. Surgery staff will call you again.

After Surgery

You will be contacted by phone to go to your child's Inpatient room when your child's surgery is over. Your child will join you in the room shortly after his/her time in the recovery room.

IVs - Your child may come back from surgery with an IV.

- This supplies fluids after surgery and may also be used to give pain medications and antibiotics.
- The IV will stay in until your child is able to eat and drink without problems and until it is no longer needed for medications.
- Please call the nurse if you notice any unusual pain, swelling or redness around the IV site.

Vital Signs & Frequent Checks - The nurse will frequently check vital signs and the surgery site for any sign of problems.

- Changing your child's position is necessary to avoid skin problems from prolonged pressure and to ensure proper breathing.
- Sleep may be interrupted for turning, vital signs, nursing checks and breathing treatments.



Pain & Medication - A certain amount of discomfort is expected following surgery, and the staff is committed to making your child comfortable.

- Your child's throat may be sore from the breathing tube used in surgery.
- Medications are available to help, but they may not always make the pain go away completely. Some pain is caused by the surgery, but some is caused by muscle spasms or cramps.
- The sudden jerking of an arm or leg and severe pain that suddenly comes and goes are signs of muscle spasms. Medication may be given to help this. The nurse will assess your child's pain according to their developmental level.
- Encourage your child to communicate with the nurse about their pain.
- Please tell the nurse when you feel your child is becoming uncomfortable or if you do not think the medication is helping to decrease the pain.

Fever - Children sometimes have a fever after surgery, which can be caused by stress to the body and decreased activity.

- Fever following surgery is common and does not mean there is a complication.
- Fever usually goes away as your child begins to feel better and becomes more active.
- If your child has a fever, cover them with only a light sheet. A heavy blanket may cause the fever to increase.
- The nurse may encourage fluids, deep breathing and coughing to clear the lungs and give medicine to decrease the fever.

Behavior Changes - Surgery can cause behavior changes in your child.

- You may notice increased irritability, outbursts of anger, restlessness, back talk or other behaviors that are not usual for your child.
- You may also note some regression in behavior, such as thumb sucking, whining or bed-wetting. These are temporary responses, and your child's behavior will soon return to normal.
- You can help your child cope by being patient, assisting them with their treatment and providing reassurance.

Going to the Bathroom after Surgery - The urinary tract may be slow to "wake up" after surgery.

- Please tell your nurse as soon as your child needs to go to the bathroom.
- Your nurse will help your child with this process.

Beginning to Eat Again after Surgery - The stomach and bowel are also slow to "wake up" after surgery.

- This can cause some people to get sick to their stomachs and sometimes throw up.
- This usually lasts a short time and can be helped with medication.
- A cool cloth on the forehead, lying flat in bed and limiting fluids may also help your child feel better.
- Fluids are given slowly after your child is fully awake. When your child can keep down fluids without getting sick, other foods can be given.