

## TIPS FOR SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN PAIN

- **YOU know your child better than anyone.** Tell us how your child will likely act when in pain. Help us to understand them, to know what to expect, and how best to help you both.
- **DON'T ever lie about pain to your child.** Do not tell them that "this won't hurt" if you think there is a possibility that it might. The surprise of pain upsets children the most.
- **DON'T ever threaten your child with a needle in order to gain their cooperation.** DON'T tell them you'll leave, unless they act better. This will only scare them and make it more difficult for everyone.
- **Describe the upcoming procedure, surgery, etc. to your child in your own words after the doctor or nurse explains it to you.** When you tell your child what will happen, it won't sound as scary.
- **If YOU feel very anxious about being present when your child experiences pain, tell the doctor or nurse BEFORE that pain begins.** Then we can help you tell your child what will happen and how we can help support them.
- **Talk to your child about relaxing and how the relaxation can decrease their feelings of being scared.** Tell your child to pay close attention to what you and the staff members are saying and doing. You can work together to stay in control and help keep the pain as low as possible.
- **You can help your child to relax before, and be distracted during, a painful experience using the same type of soothing things you do at home.** You being there is very important to your child. To help relax your child, use soothing words and touch. Rhythmic stroking of the child's hair, arm, etc. is often very relaxing. You can sing a favorite song softly and rock back and forth. You can talk about your child's favorite thing to do, place to go and people he or she knows to keep their attention off of the pain.
- **Talk to your child often about how well they are doing telling you about their pain and working with you, the doctors and nurses, to keep their pain low.** Tell him how glad you are that you're with him. Pat yourself on the back – being a parent and supporting one's child experiencing pain is HARD work – you deserve it!



## TAKING YOUR CHILD HOME

Your child has just completed a procedure requiring sedation. Although it may seem that your child is awake at the time of discharge, the effects of the sedation may be present 12-24 hours later. Below are some general instructions regarding the care of your child.

- 1) **Common effects from the medication may include:** drowsiness after the procedure, difficulty with balance and walking, and irritability. Less common are vomiting and hiccups. If your child vomits more than three times, call your physician or the Emergency Department at Fort Memorial Hospital (920-568-5330).
- 2) **Because your child's reflexes may be abnormal 12-24 hours after the procedure, please consider the following safety issues:**
  - Do not allow them to play alone
  - Assist them with steps
  - Protect them from falls and watch them around furniture or other sharp objects
  - Your child should not take a tub bath or go swimming that day/night
  - Your child should not ride their bicycle or play outside
  - Do not take them to school or to daycare following the procedure
- 3) **Your child may drink clear liquids as soon as he/she is awake.** No food or milk products should be given until your child has been awake for one hour.

**Feel free to call us if you have any questions or concerns. The Ambulatory Care Department number is 920-568-5080, or the main hospital number is 920-568-5000.**

**REMEMBER:** It is state law that your child be in a restraint/seatbelt while in the car. Please ensure they are properly restrained on your way home.

## YOU & YOUR CHILD'S SURGERY



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# YOU & YOUR CHILD'S SURGERY



## TEAMWORK FOR YOUR CHILD

Fort HealthCare understands that the child's family is the constant in their life. We do our best to meet the needs of the child and understand you are the child's advocate for care. We know the child's voice is important too.

It is important to Fort HealthCare that the surgical experience for your child and the family is as pleasant as possible. We have toys and videos available to help keep them occupied during waiting periods. Your child is welcome to bring a favorite soft toy or blanket with them to the hospital. They can even bring this item to surgery with them.

## BEFORE YOUR CHILD'S PROCEDURE

Before coming to the hospital, you can help prepare your child for this event. We invite you to meet Charlie and watch the Pediatric Surgery video on our website at [FortHealthCare.com/PediatricSurgery](http://FortHealthCare.com/PediatricSurgery) to see what hospital surgery is like. A parent or legal guardian must accompany your child to the hospital to sign the surgery consent form and must remain in the hospital while your child is here for their procedure.

Once your child goes to the surgery area, our staff will never leave your child's side. Your child's safety is our top priority.

## ANESTHESIA & YOUR CHILD

A nurse anesthetist will meet with you when you arrive at the hospital prior to surgery. They will discuss your child's health and plan the safest anesthetic course for your child. We enjoy visiting with the children beforehand to meet them and answer questions anyone may have.

## HELPING YOUR CHILD

Some children may be hesitant to leave their parents at the time of surgery so we ask for your assistance in preparing them for this experience. While we do not routinely order sedatives for children pre-operatively, it may be an option that you should discuss with the anesthetist caring for your child.

There is much that you can do to prepare your child for this event. Let your child know that you can walk with them toward the operating room, and that you will be waiting when he or she wakes up. Encourage your child to decide between walking with the nurse and riding on the cart. Your child may bring their favorite soft toy or blanket along for the adventure.



## CHILDREN UNDER AGE 8

Most children under the age of 8 drift off to sleep by breathing anesthesia gases through a clear face mask. It takes a few minutes for this process and your child remembers very little of this. The anesthetist and RN often hold your child to comfort them. If an intravenous (IV) line is required, it will be started after your child is safely asleep.

***Our staff members remain very focused on the safety of your child at all times.***

## OLDER CHILDREN

Older children usually go to sleep more quickly with the intravenous (IV) injection through a small tube that is placed into the child's vein before surgery. The IV will be started while your child is still in the pre-op room, with you present. There are options for numbing the skin before the tube is inserted. Anesthesia will discuss what the best option is for your child.

## AFTER SURGERY

After surgery and while you are visiting with the surgeon, our staff will be preparing your child to wake up from the anesthetic. Your child will then be taken to the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). Almost all children are disoriented and agitated for 15-20 minutes after awakening. This is a normal result of anesthesia and not from pain. PACU nurses will continue to monitor your child through their recovery.

Once the nurse has completed this process, one parent or caregiver may be allowed to enter the PACU to be with your child. The nurses ensure the safety needs of your child first and will let you know as soon as you may join your child.

- Only one family member may be at the child's bedside while in the PACU.
- This person must either be a parent, caregiver or legal guardian.
- This person must be 18 years of age or older.
- Cell phones and cameras are not allowed.
- Food and drink are not allowed.



- Patient privacy is important to us. Please remain behind the curtain at your child's bedside.
- Please comply if asked to leave the PACU. This would be for your child's safety and so all attention can be focused on your child.

**You may only be allowed into the PACU if you agree to these conditions and the anesthetist and PACU nursing staff determine it is safe to do so.**

We know this experience can be stressful for you. Please know that your child's safety is our top priority. Do not hesitate to ask any questions you may have.

We will provide clear instructions to help you care for your child when you take them home.

**If you have any questions, please ask!**

**You can call the Fort HealthCare Ambulatory Care Department at 920-568-5080 during regular business hours, or the main hospital at (920)568-5000 and ask for the House Supervisor. We are here to assist you.**