

Bringing your child to Chelsea Hospital

A pre-operative visit

Your anaesthetist will visit you in your room, before the procedure to discuss your child's anaesthetic.

The anaesthetist needs to find out about your child's general health, previous experiences of anaesthesia, any medicines your child is taking and any allergies he or she has.

This is a good time to talk about any particular concerns you have about the anaesthetic. You may find it helpful to make a list of questions you want to ask.

Your surgeon will also visit you and your child before you go to theatre.

Going to theatre

Chelsea will provide a gown for your child to wear or your child may prefer to wear their own pyjamas. Please ensure that you provide a clean pair of pyjamas if this is the case. Your child may be able to keep their underwear on, depending on the surgery being performed.

You and your child will walk to the Operating Theatre with a member of the theatre team.

On most occasions you will be able to accompany your child to theatre and remain with them while they are anaesthetised. You will be accompanied by a member of the theatre or recovery team. They will provide guidance on where to stand and when to leave. You may be required to wear a hat, shoe covers and an over gown.

Once your child is asleep you will need to leave the theatre. It is important that you follow the guidance from your accompanying nurse.

The anaesthetist stays in close attendance and your child is closely monitored during the procedure.

In the recovery room

Your child will wake up in the recovery room. The anaesthetist is close by and can help if needed. Your child will be cared for by a specialist nurse who makes sure your child is awake and comfortable. She/he will give extra pain relief and anti-sickness medicines if they are needed.

You will be called to be with your child during the waking up process.

Children may show some signs of confusion and/or distress when they wake up. This is more likely in younger children. They may cry and roll around. The recovery room nurses are experienced at looking after children at this time. They will consider whether more pain relief will help.

Pain relief

Pain relieving drugs are given during the anaesthetic to ensure that your child wakes up as comfortable as possible. The type of pain relief will depend on the procedure.

The anaesthetist and/or surgeon will talk to you about the best type of pain relief for your child.

After recovery

Your child will be returned to their room with the recovery nurse accompanying you. You will need to stay at Chelsea for at least 2 hours post-operatively for a day stay procedure. Your nurse will let you know when you can go home. Your child will be monitored during this time and their blood pressure and pulse rate recorded. Your nurse will make sure that your child is comfortable and that their wound is not bleeding.

Overnight stays

You will be able to stay with your child if your child requires an overnight stay. There may be costs associated with this. Please contact our administration team to discuss this further.

Going home

It is often possible for your child to return home on the day of their operation or procedure.

You will be provided with pain relief medicines as needed, or staff may check what you have at home already. Staff should make sure that you know how to give the pain relief medicines. It is usually best to give pain relief medicines regularly.

Some children feel sick or may be sick on the journey home. It is useful to be prepared!

If you are taking your child home on the day of the operation, you will be given a discharge summary detailing your child's procedure which will also provide a contact number to ring if you have concerns about your child once home.

One of our nurses will phone you a few days following discharge to see how your child is doing.