Your Child's Surgery

Our pediatric health care professionals understand the natural concerns about surgery that parents and children experience - we are here to help you and your child understand the pediatric surgery process and answer any questions you may have.

Through our on-site hospital tour, you will learn about parts of surgery that may be the most stressful for your child, ways to prepare your child and their siblings for the upcoming surgery, and the possible emotional reactions your child may express.

On-Site Pediatric Hospital Tour

If your child is three years or older, child life specialists recommend that you and your child come to the NewYork-Presbyterian (NYP) Phyllis and David Komansky Children’s Hospital for a special tour (you may attend without your child if they are younger than three). Our preoperative tour will help you and your child prepare for surgery, as well as see and learn all about the hospital.

The tour starts with "medical play", during which a child life specialist will encourage children to see and play with medical equipment that they will experience, such as an oxygen mask or surgical mask, and role-play with this equipment using dolls as "patients".

Next, children and parents are taken on a tour of the Komansky Children’s Hospital. Each step of the process will be explained in an age-appropriate manner for young visitors. Although children do not visit an operating room, they will visit the recovery room. They get to meet staff and familiarize themselves with virtually every area they will see from the moment they arrive on the day of their hospitalization.

Both you and your child will have the opportunity to ask questions throughout the tour. Teenagers are also encouraged to take a preoperative tour, which will be geared to their age group.

Appointments for these tours are required. To arrange your preoperative tour, please call (212) 746-9970 and leave a message. One of our child life specialists will return your call and set up your tour. Once you have registered, you will be sent a letter reminding you when and where to meet for the tour, a parking valet voucher, and a list of books that are appropriate for your child's
age group and their surgery.

For more information about what to expect leading up to your child’s surgery, download our NYP Child Life Services Brochure: Preparing Your Child for Surgery

Hospital Discharge Planning

Going Home
Discharge planning begins on your child's first day in the hospital. Your child's social worker will evaluate their needs and, along with your child's healthcare team, determine what arrangements should be made in order for your child to have everything that they need going home.

This may include:

- homecare services
- medical equipment and/or supplies
- community resources
- counseling
- rehabilitation
- home-school instruction
- transportation

It is often a lengthy process to set up all appropriate services and have them approved by your insurance provider or Medicaid; a social worker will begin this process early in your child's stay. Our goal is to make the transition from hospital to home as effortless as possible.

Your child's physician, in collaboration with other members of our healthcare team, will decide when it is appropriate to discharge your child from the hospital. Families are included in this planning process, and will generally be notified the day prior. A registered pediatric nurse works collaboratively with care coordinators, social workers, physicians, and other hospital departments in planning for discharge continued care.

You will receive a discharge notice and instructions that include information about managing your child's care at home, home care assistance, safe and effective use of medication and equipment, pain management, overall safety, modified diets, food/drug interactions, and follow-up care. Do not hesitate to ask your child's nurse to explain these discharge instructions.

A parent or guardian must be available to take children home. As you make arrangements to leave the hospital, please note that discharge time is before 10 a.m.

Hospital Discharge Checklist
The following checklist will help you prepare for a smooth transition home for your child:

1. Ask for information about your child's medicine in terms that you can understand.
2. Make sure you understand medication dosing instructions.
3. Ask for information about home care services your child may need or that have been arranged for your child.
4. Ask your child's physician, nurse and nutritionist to explain the treatment plan you will follow at home.
5. Ask for a copy of your child's discharge summary, which will list the following:
   - diagnosis and procedures performed
   - discharge instructions for medication, diet and activity
   - follow-up appointments

If your child is an infant or toddler, please remember to bring a safety seat for the car ride home.

If you have any questions about discharge instructions or your child’s care, please let our healthcare team know. They are happy to answer any questions.