



Isle of Wight
NHS Trust

Patient Information Leaflet

Your child is having a general anaesthetic Information for families

Produced by:
Children's Ward

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If you are unable to read this leaflet because English is not your first language, please ask someone who speaks English to telephone PALS on 01983 534850 for further information and help.

Polish:

Jeśli nie jesteś w stanie przeczytać tej ulotki bo angielski nie jest pierwszym językiem, poproś kogoś, kto mówi po angielsku, o kontakt telefoniczny z (PALS 01983 534850) aby uzyskać więcej informacji i pomoc

Russian:

Если вы не можете прочитать этот буклет на английском языке потому что не является первым языке, пожалуйста, попросите кого-нибудь, кто говорит на английском языке для телефонного (PALS 01983 534850) для получения дополнительной информации и помощи

Turkish:

Eğer İngilizce ana diliniz değilse, çünkü bu broşürü okumak için yapamıyorsanız, daha fazla bilgi için 01983 534850 üzerinde PALS telefon İngilizce bilen birine sormak ve yardım lütfen

Bulgarian:

Ако не сте в състояние да прочетете тази листовка, тъй като английският не е първи език, попитайте някой, който говори английски, за да телефонирам (PALS на 01983 534850) за повече информация и помощ

Czech:

Pokud nejste schopni přečíst tuto příbalovou informaci, protože angličtina není vaším rodným jazykem, zeptejte se někoho, kdo mluví anglicky na telefonní PALS na 01983 534850 pro další informace a pomoc

Bengali:

আপনি ইংরেজি আপনার প্রথম ভাষা না থাকার কারণে এই লফিলটে পড়তে অক্ষম হন, তাহলে আরও তথ্যের জন্য 01983 534850 নভেগিশেন PALS টেলিফোনে ইংরেজি কথা কতে জিজ্ঞাসা করুন এবং সাহায্য করুন

What is a general anaesthetic?

A general anaesthetic ensures that your child is fully asleep and free of pain during a test or operation. It consists of a combination of drugs given either as a gas to breathe, or as an injection. General anaesthetics are only given by Anaesthetists.

Who are Anaesthetists?

Anaesthetists are specialist doctors who look after people before, during and after surgery. Their role is to ensure that your child is asleep and safe throughout surgery and wake up comfortably at the end.

Why do I need to see an Anaesthetist before the anaesthetic?

An Anaesthetist should see you on the ward to discuss your child's general health and to discuss the anaesthetic. The Anaesthetist will ask you if your child has had an anaesthetic previously and whether he or she has any allergies and will discuss options for anaesthesia and pain relief medication.

Why should my child not eat or drink before having an anaesthetic?

It is important that your child's stomach is as empty as possible as this reduces the risk of vomiting during and after the operation. The nurses on the ward will discuss with you the time when your child should have his or her last food and drink before the operation.

If your child's operation is in the morning, (07:30 am start):

- 'Nil by mouth' from 12 midnight the previous night
- Wake up **before** 06:00 am on the morning of the operation and give a clear fluid drink, (e.g. water, weak squash, **not milk**). This drink needs to be finished by 6 am.

If your child's operation is in the afternoon, (11:30 am start):

- A light breakfast before 07:30 a.m. then nothing to eat
- Clear fluids, (e.g. water, weak squash, **not milk**) until 10.30 a.m. then 'Nil by mouth'.

What is a 'pre-medication'?

Pre-medication or a 'pre-med' is a medicine given to help ease a child's anxiety because of the type of surgery your child is having. It can also be used as pain relief and may be offered by the anaesthetist.

When used, a 'pre-med' is given an hour or so before the anaesthetic – usually in the form of a liquid for your child to swallow. This gives it a chance to begin to work within the body before the operation.

Will I be able to stay with my child while he or she goes to sleep?

Yes, one parent is very welcome to come to the anaesthetic room and will be able to stay until your child is asleep. Once he or she is asleep, you will return to the ward or to the waiting area in the Day Unit with the ward nurse.

How will my child be given the anaesthetic?

Your child will either have an anaesthetic gas to breathe or an injection.

Anaesthetic gas takes a minute or two to work. The anaesthetist generally cups a facemask over your child's mouth and nose to give your child the gas. If your child is a toddler it may be possible to give the anaesthetic while your child is sitting in your lap.

If your child is having an anaesthetic by injection, local anaesthetic 'Magic cream' is put on the hand in the ward about an hour before surgery. This numbs the skin so that a small plastic tube (cannula) can be put in the vein. The anaesthetic is injected through this cannula.

What happens next?

You will be escorted to the waiting area in the Day Unit or taken back to the ward by the nurse.

The anaesthetist will closely monitor your child's blood pressure, pulse, temperature and breathing throughout the operation ensuring that he or she is safe and fully asleep. When the operation is finished, your child will be transferred to the recovery room. The plastic cannula may be left in place but it does not cause more than minor discomfort. Your child may be given fluids through this cannula.

What is the recovery room?

This is a large room in the operating theatre suite where your child wakes up from the anaesthetic. Each child is closely looked after by a nurse until he or she is awake and comfortable enough to return to the ward.

You may be called, (when appropriate) to sit with your child until he or she is recovered and ready to go back to the ward.

What do I do while my child is having the operation / procedure?

Many parents say that time seems to pass slowly while your child is having an operation. You could return to the ward with the ward nurse and wait, or you may prefer, to go to the hospital café or out for a walk. It is important that the ward nurses know how to contact you in case anything needs to be discussed with you during the surgery and so that you can go with them to collect your child.

How safe is anaesthesia and are there any side effects?

Modern anaesthesia is very safe and complications are rare. The Anaesthetist is an experienced doctor who is trained to deal with any complications.

Most children recover quickly and are soon back to normal after an anaesthetic, but some may suffer after effects. These can include a headache, sore throat and dizziness. Some children may feel sick and vomit. These effects usually last only a short time and there are medicines available to treat these effects if necessary.

Other complications may occur depending on your child's medical condition, the type of surgery and anaesthetic used. If there are risk factors specific to your child these will be discussed with you beforehand.

Will my child be in pain?

While your child is asleep, pain relief is given to help make him or her as comfortable as possible after surgery. The type and strength of pain relief given depends on the procedure or operation and this will be discussed beforehand.

What types of pain relief medicines are available and do they have any side effects?

All drugs and treatments have potential complications but these methods are remarkably safe and are often used after children's surgery.

Suppositories: Some painkillers like paracetamol can be given rectally, (into the bottom). These are often given while your child is still asleep and last several hours. Suppositories are also very good for pain relief when children are feeling sick.

Local anaesthesia: This is given by injection into or near the nerves around the wound to numb the area of operation. It is given while your child is asleep and the effect usually lasts a few hours.

Morphine: Occasionally morphine is used either orally post operatively; or given during surgery by the Anaesthetist. This is a strong pain killer and is usually very effective. If your child has received Morphine, they may have to stay on the ward slightly longer if they are a day case, to ensure the effects have worn off.

Discharge advice

- Your child should not attend school for at least 24 hours.
- You should have a responsible adult to stay with your child overnight and the next day
- You should not allow your child to cycle or go on busy roads or playgrounds unaccompanied for 24 hours.
- Your child should rest, especially if feeling nauseous or dizzy.
- Your child should drink plenty of fluids.
- Observe any special precautions which the Surgeon, Anaesthetist or nurse may advise.

Please use this space to write down any questions you may have.

Any problems

If you are worried and have any problems during the first 24 hours please contact us on the number below.

The children's Community Nurse will phone you, or call on you if you are not on the phone, the day following the operation to check everything is alright.

Please feel free to discuss any concerns you may have with the nurse looking after you.

THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR GUIDANCE ONLY.

IN THE EVENT OF ANY PROBLEMS WITHIN THE FIRST 24 HOURS CONTACT Children's Ward: (01983) 534695

After the first 24 hours, please contact your own GP.

The Royal College of Anaesthetists website provides information for children about having an operation.

This is suitable for children of all ages.

The address is: <http://www.rcoa.ac.uk/>

Follow the 'for patients' link and then the 'anaesthesia information for children and young people' link to see these leaflets and games that help explain the process of having an operation.

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If you have any queries or concerns about the content of this leaflet please call (01983) 524081 and ask to speak to the relevant department.

If you require this leaflet in another language, large print or another format, please contact the PALS Team, telephone **01983 534850**, who will advise you.

Valuables should not be brought into the hospital. If patients have to bring in valuable items they should ask a nurse to store them safely and request a receipt for the items. You may not be able to have the valuable items returned if the time of discharge from hospital is out of hours.

We are sorry but the Trust cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage to items not given for safe keeping.

You can get further information on all sorts of health issues online at: **www.nhs.uk**

For Health advice and out of hours GP service please call the NHS 111 service on: **111**

We Value Your Views On Our Service

If you wish to comment on the care which you, your relative or friend has received, we will be pleased to hear from you. Please speak to the person in charge of the ward, clinic or service in the first instance or ask them to contact the PALS Team. If you wish to contact them directly, telephone on **01983 534850**.

Alternatively you may prefer to write to:

Chief Executive
Isle Of Wight NHS Trust
St Mary's Hospital
Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5TG

You can also share any concerns you have about our services with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) on **03000 61 61 61** or at **enquiries@cqc.org.uk**

All NHS sites are no smoking areas.

If you would like help and advice to stop smoking please call: Freephone 0800 169 0 169 to talk to the NHS Smoking Helpline.