

Advice for Young Persons Having an Operation

You are going to be admitted to the children's ward (Buxton) to have an operation.

What will happen before my operation?

Before you can have your general anaesthetic you will not be able to eat or drink. If your operation is a planned one please follow the advice below, if it is an emergency operation your nurse and doctor will advise you when to stop having food and drink.

- **For a morning operation** – you must have nothing to eat from midnight the night before, then only clear fluids until 6am on the morning of your operation. After 6am nothing to eat or drink.
- **For an afternoon operation** – you may have a light early breakfast which must be completed by 7am, then clear fluids until 11am. After 11am nothing to eat or drink.

Definitions:

- Clear fluids – plain water or orange/lemon squash. Please do not have any fizzy drinks, fruit juices or milk.
- Light breakfast – cornflakes or similar or toast or bread. No cooked food. Porridge is acceptable.
- You should not eat chewing gum or sweets after midnight for a morning operation or after 7am for an afternoon operation.

Once admitted to the ward:

- Before your operation a surgeon and an anaesthetist (the person who gives you the medicine to go to sleep) will come and see you and ask you some questions.
- You can wear your own night clothes or you will be given a gown to wear which you can change into just before it is time for your operation.
- You will need to have a cannula (a small plastic tube) inserted into a vein, usually on the back of your hand. The cannula sits in a vein and allows medicines or fluid to be given directly into your bloodstream. Before you have this you can have some cream put on the backs of your hands which makes this area feel numb. This cream will stay on for about an hour. While you have this cream on you will still be able to use your hands.
- When it is time for your operation, a member of the theatre team will come and collect you. They will push you on your bed to the anaesthetic room. This is where you will go to sleep for your operation.

What will happen in the anaesthetic room?

- One parent or an adult can come into the anaesthetic room with you, along with your ward nurse, until you are fast asleep.
- Before you go to sleep the anaesthetist will need to insert a cannula, usually into the back of your hand. This is so the anaesthetist can give you the anaesthetic to go to sleep.

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What happens after my operation?

- You will wake up in a large room called recovery. A nurse will look after you.
- When you start to wake up, the nurse looking after you can get your parent(s) or adult visitors to come and sit with you in recovery if you want them to.
- When you wake up, you may have a mask over your mouth and nose giving you some special air called oxygen.
- You will have a soft, spongy 'peg' on your finger or toe. This will tell your nurse how well you are breathing air into your body and how fast your heart is beating.
- Depending on your operation you may be allowed to have a small drink in recovery.

What happens if I feel sore?

- If you are sore, tell the nurse who is looking after you. They will be able to give you some medicine to help.

What happens if I feel sick?

- If you feel sick when you wake up, then tell your nurse and they can give you some medicine to help you feel better.

When will I go back to the ward?

- When you are awake and feeling comfortable, your recovery nurse will escort you back to the ward, you will be pushed on your bed by a theatre porter.
- Once back on the ward if you are allowed, you will be offered a drink and as long as you aren't sick after this you will be able to eat.
- Depending on the type of surgery you have had you may be able to go home once fully recovered from the anaesthetic.
- You will need to have something to eat and drink on the ward and go to the toilet before you can go home.
- Your nurse will remove the cannula in your hand (unless it needs to remain) and will put a small plaster on if need be.
- Your doctor may come to see you before you go home, your nurse will be able to tell you if you need to see your doctor before you go home.

For further information please speak to your ward nurse.

