

Pre-Surgery Instruction Guide

Surgery Date


We will send texts reminding you of the surgery date.

Arrival Time


We will call 1-2 business days before surgery to confirm your arrival time.

Texas Children's surgery locations In the Texas Medical Center (TMC)


Maps and directions: [texaschildrens.org/maps-and-directions](https://www.texaschildrens.org/maps-and-directions)



Wallace Tower **Level 7**
6701 Fannin St., Houston 77030




Legacy Tower **Level 8**
6651 Main St., Houston 77030 **Level 20**




West Tower **Level 3**
6621 Fannin St., Houston 77030

In the TMC, please allow Valet Services to park your car. Valet parking will be validated for one vehicle only the day of surgery.

Texas Children's community hospitals



West Campus Hospital **Level 3**
18200 Katy Freeway, Houston 77094



The Woodlands Hospital **Level 3**
17600 Interstate 45 South, The Woodlands 77384

Parking is available in West Campus and The Woodlands parking lots and garages at no charge.

Eating and drinking before surgery


Read more inside about your child's anesthesia and the importance of not eating and drinking before surgery.




**STOP food 8 hours
before arrival.**
@ _____



**STOP milk/formula
6 hours before arrival.**
@ _____



**Continue taking all
prescribed medications
prior to surgery unless
otherwise instructed.**



**STOP breast milk
4 hours before arrival.**
@ _____



**DRINK clear liquids
until arrival time.**
@ _____

Clear liquids include **water, Pedialyte®, Sprite® or 7-Up®, Gatorade®, or Powerade®** and apple juice.

Bathing before surgery



- ☐ Wash body using soap and water. Pat dry with a freshly washed towel after bathing. Put on clean clothes. If bathing the night before surgery, make sure to sleep on clean sheets.
- ☐ Follow the specific bathing instructions from your doctor.

On the day of surgery

Check in at Surgery Reception

After arriving at the hospital, check in at the correct Surgery Reception location. You may be asked to review administrative and financial details before beginning the surgery process.



Child Life resources

Texas Children's Child Life specialists are trained to assist each child with the hospital experience based on the patient's emotional and developmental needs. They are available to talk with your child about what to expect during the surgery process and to help ease the fear and anxiety often associated with hospitals by promoting positive coping techniques. Ask a staff member to speak with a Child Life specialist on the day of your child's surgery — this service is available at no additional cost to families.



Preparing for surgery

Soon, you and your child will be taken to the pre-op area. In this part of the operating room suite, many people will talk to you and your child. Nurses will confirm your child's name and ask about the type of surgery they are having. They will ask questions about when your child last ate food or drank liquids. They will also ask about any allergies your child may have.

More than one person will ask these questions. This is to double- and triple-check facts making sure your child's surgery is as safe as possible. The staff will also confirm that you have signed consent forms for surgery.

You and your child will meet with an anesthesiologist before surgery to discuss what type of anesthesia will be used and how it will be given. The pediatric anesthesiologists and all members of the anesthesia team at Texas Children's are specially trained to provide expert care to children of all ages. They will address any questions you have concerning potential side effects and your child's experience during and after surgery.



Next, the surgeon will visit your child and, if necessary, mark the part of the body that is to be operated on. Once the pre-surgical checks have taken place, your child will be taken to the operating room. Our team will direct you to the waiting area for families.

During your child's surgery

In the operating room, the surgeon, anesthesiologist and operating room staff work together to ensure the best care for your child. Our anesthesia care team monitors your child's vital signs beat by beat, watching for changes in heart rate, breathing and blood pressure, and making adjustments in the anesthesia to keep your child comfortable and safe while the surgery is completed.

It is important to let someone know where you will be during your child's surgery if you leave the waiting area. The surgeon and nursing staff need to be able to reach you for updates during and after surgery.



Please bring this guide with you on the day of surgery.

Preparing for your child's surgery

Follow all eating and drinking instructions before surgery

Your child will most likely receive general anesthesia during surgery. Anesthesia is a medicine given by a doctor so your child feels no pain or sensation during surgery.

Your child must have an empty stomach before receiving anesthesia to avoid choking or vomiting during their procedure. It is also important to keep your child hydrated before surgery. Closely follow the stop times for food and milk/formula, but give your child water, apple juice or sport drinks like Gatorade or Powerade until you arrive at the hospital. Make sure the sport drinks do not have protein additives.

Make sure that your child is not sneaking snacks after the food and drink cutoff time. If your child does not follow these rules and does not have an empty stomach, the procedure may be canceled for safety reasons.

Plan a shower or bath for the night before or the morning of surgery

Your child's safety before, during and after surgery is our first priority. In any surgery, however, there is a small risk of infection from germs and bacteria on the skin. You can help reduce the risk of infection during your child's surgery by carefully bathing your child before surgery.

Instructions for bathing

1. Wash hair as usual. Rinse well.
2. If you received special bathing instructions from your surgeon, make sure to follow them. Otherwise, wash body using soap and water.
3. Wash and rinse thoroughly. Do not scrub the skin too hard.
4. Do not shave any body parts near the area of surgery.
5. Pat dry with a fresh, clean towel after bathing. Put on clean clothes. Make sure to sleep on clean sheets if bathing the night before surgery.
6. Do not apply any lotion, deodorant, perfume, diaper cream or powder after bathing.



Plan ahead

What to know before arriving

- Plan to be at the hospital for the entire day.
- Only 2 adults and the child having surgery are allowed in the surgery waiting area, the pre-op area and the PACU/recovery areas.
- Children under 18 are not allowed in the surgery waiting area, the pre-op area and the PACU/recovery areas.
- Dress your child in comfortable clothes that are easy to remove.
- Remove your child's jewelry or contact lenses.
- Leave any valuables at home.

Items to bring on the day of surgery

- Your child's insurance card, your ID and any payments, if needed.
- A favorite toy or blanket to help your child relax, a pillow and blanket for the ride home.
- A special bottle if your child uses one (for after surgery).
- A list of all medications your child takes, including over-the-counter medications and herbal supplements.



If all surgery instructions are not followed, your child's surgery may be canceled.

Anesthesia and your child

Being anxious about a surgery or medical procedure is normal, especially when it involves your child. Rest assured that it is the top priority of your child's physician, anesthesiologist and care team to ensure the safety and comfort of your child before, during and after their procedure. Understanding the anesthesia process and what to expect can help calm your fears so you can reduce your child's anxiety and help speed recovery.

Below you will find answers to common questions families ask when a child goes under anesthesia.



Who will provide anesthesia to your child?

A doctor called an anesthesiologist manages the care and treatment in providing pain relief before, during and after procedures or surgery. The pediatric anesthesiologists and all members of the anesthesia team at Texas Children's are specially trained to provide expert care to children of all ages.

Our anesthesiologists are board-certified and have completed subspecialty training in pediatric anesthesiology, and many hold additional board certifications in pediatrics. Anesthesia for congenital heart surgery is provided by a team with subspecialty training in pediatric cardiac anesthesiology. Anesthesiologists are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to care for patients at Texas Children's.

What is the role of the anesthesiologist in the care of your child?

Members of our anesthesia care team are giving medications and monitoring vital signs at your child's bedside throughout the procedure.

What type of treatments does our Anesthesiology department provide?

Texas Children's anesthesiologists generally provide the following services:

- Anesthesia and sedation for all types of pediatric surgery cases and procedures such as MRI, CT scan and GI endoscopy
- Evaluation of anesthesia needs for children with complex medical problems when surgery is needed
- Pain control with intravenous (IV) medications or other anesthetic techniques

What are the risks of anesthesia?

"Will going under anesthesia hurt my child?" Every anesthesiologist and surgeon has been asked this question. Even though anesthesia is much safer today than ever before, every anesthesia exposure and surgery has an element of risk. In fact, it may be difficult to separate the risks of anesthesia from the risks of the surgery or medical procedure. Anesthesia is used to take away pain and discomfort from your child and make it easier for a procedure to be accomplished in the best way possible. These benefits must be weighed against the risks of anesthesia itself.

Each type of anesthetic has a specific set of risks and side effects associated with it. Your physician anesthesiologist will talk to you about the various types of anesthesia that may be used for your child and the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Safety announcement from the FDA

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a safety announcement regarding the potential effect of anesthetics on children younger than 3 years of age.

- A single, short exposure to anesthesia appears to be safe.
- There is some evidence that longer (>3 hours) or repeated exposures could have negative effects on behavior or learning.
- Much more research is needed

Because anesthesia or sedation is necessary during most procedures to keep your child safe and comfortable, discuss the following items with your doctor before your procedure.

- Should the procedure be done now or when the child is older?
- How long is the procedure expected to take?
- Will repeated or additional procedures be needed?

Information on anesthesia for children

Texas Children's Hospital
Department of Anesthesiology
texaschildrens.org/anesthesiology
832-824-5800

SmartTots
smarttots.org

Society for Pediatric Anesthesia
pedsanesthesia.org

FDA Statement on Pediatric Anesthesia
fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/ucm554634.htm



Notes, questions or reminders



If all surgery instructions are not followed, your child's surgery may be canceled.

After surgery

After surgery, your child will be taken to the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) area. Your surgeon will come out to discuss the surgery with you. You will be brought to the PACU area once your child is awake from anesthesia.

Your child's care team, including an anesthesiologist, will closely monitor your child as they emerge from anesthesia. Some children are fully alert while others are groggy for several hours. In addition, nausea and vomiting can occur as a side effect of the anesthesia. Your anesthesiologist and the PACU team work together to reduce any side effects and implement a pain control plan to make your child's recovery as comfortable as possible.

If your child is going home on the same day as the surgery, we will give you instructions for care at home. If your child is being admitted to the hospital after surgery, you will be transferred as soon as the appropriate room or unit is available.



Important phone numbers

Medical concerns

If you have questions about your child's surgery or instructions, call your surgeon's office.

Insurance coverage, payment and billing information

Before surgery:

Pre-Service Department

832-824-2004

After surgery:

Customer Service Department

832-824-2300

Learn more online: texaschildrens.org/preparingforsurgery

For parents

- Videos on preparing for your child's surgery
- A description of the surgery experience
- Information on anesthesia for children
- Helpful tips from our Child Life specialists

For children

- "I'm having surgery today!" — A worksheet to guide children through the surgery experience

