

Children returning for urgent plastic surgery with a general anaesthetic

Our plastic surgery team reviewed your child in the emergency department (ED) and your child is coming back to Evelina London Children's Hospital for surgery. You should have been given a copy of our leaflet Your child's anaesthetic. Please ask a member of staff if you do not have one.

What happens next?

You might take your child home overnight, and the doctor in the emergency department will tell you when you should come back to the hospital. The doctor will also tell you when your child needs to stop eating and drinking (fasting) before their operation.

You will need to phone the hospital bed manager on the morning of your child's planned surgery date, **before** you leave home.

To contact Evelina London's hospital bed manager

1. Phone 020 7188 7188.
2. Follow instructions for bleep desk.
3. Bleep 0821.
4. Wait on the phone for the bed manager to respond.
5. Come to the ward they allocate you at the time you've agreed with them. The time will depend on when your child's surgery is scheduled.

Please make sure that you do not arrive late to the ward, as this could delay your child's treatment. This is particularly important if you are asked to return at 6.50am to 7am the next day.

Please note that we may not always be able to give you a precise time for your child's surgery as the operating theatre list changes depending on other emergencies that may need to take priority. Sometimes operations are delayed until later the same day, or the next day.

If you have other children, please make alternative childcare arrangements for them to be looked after by someone else.

Fasting (nil by mouth') instructions

Your child's will have a general anaesthetic, so it is important that your child does not eat or drink after the times stated below. When you know what time your child's operation is, you might find it useful to complete this table with the latest times that your child can eat and drink.

Food and drink	Hours before planned surgery	Time
Last food, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • boiled sweets • chewing gum • fizzy drinks • milk feed 	6	
Last breast feed	3	
Last drink of water or clear fluid ‘Clear fluids’ are transparent to light, and non-fizzy. They include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • water • squash or cordial • oral rehydration solution (such as Dioralyte™) • ready-made non-fizzy drinks • clear apple juice These are not clear fluids : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all fizzy drinks • pure fruit juice (with or without bits), except for clear apple juice • milk • any fluids with thickener added 	2	

It is important to follow these instructions carefully. If there is food or liquid in your child’s stomach during the anaesthetic, it could come up to the back of their throat and damage their lungs.

If your child has any existing health conditions, such as diabetes or a metabolic condition, please ask the emergency department staff for more advice about fasting.

If your child’s surgery is delayed, you will be told, and your child’s nurse will ask the anaesthetist if the child can be given a water or other clear fluid to prevent thirst and dehydration.

Medicines

If your child is taking regular medicines, you should continue to give them as usual on the day of surgery, with a small sip of water, unless the anaesthetist or the surgeon has said otherwise.

What to bring with you

To make your child’s stay more comfortable and safer, please bring these items with you:

- **Medicines.** Any regular medicines your child takes, so they can be given on time.
- **A favourite toy or comforter.** This will help them when they wake up from the anaesthetic.
- **Activities to keep your child occupied.** A book, toy, or an electronic device (please bring headphones so the noise doesn’t disturb other patients). Our play specialist team might be able to provide extra activities).
- **Chargers for any electronic devices.**
- **Food for yourself.** We can only provide meals for your child.
- **Medicines for yourself.** We cannot provide any for people who are not patients.

Your child may have to stay in hospital for 3 to 4 hours after a general anaesthetic. This is to make sure that:

- your child has recovered enough from the anaesthetic and operation to travel home safely
- your child does not have a high temperature (fever)
- your child is eating, drinking, and peeing
- your child's pain is well controlled and they appear comfortable

We suggest you pack a small overnight bag and wash bag in case your child needs to stay overnight. If this happens, 1 parent can stay, sleeping in the pull-down bed next to your child's bed.

We recommend that you **do not** bring valuables or large amounts of cash with you, as there are no secure places to store valuables in the hospital.

Contact us

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For more information about conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **web:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk

More information

Evelina London Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's medicines, please speak to the staff caring for them or contact our helpline, **phone:** 020 7188 3003, Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm
email: letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), **phone:** 020 7188 8801 **email:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk. To make a complaint contact the resolution department **phone:** 020 7188 3514 **email:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please contact the department your appointment is with.

NHS 111

This service offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day, **phone:** 111
web: www.111.nhs.uk

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