

# Information for parents of children having plastic surgery under general anaesthetic

The plastic surgery team have reviewed your child in the accident and emergency (A&E) department and have requested that your child returns to Evelina Children's Hospital for plastic surgery. You should also have been given a copy of our leaflet **Your child's anaesthetic**. Please ask a member of staff if you have not.

## What happens next?

You may take your child home overnight and the doctor in A&E will tell you when you should come back. The doctor will also give you fasting times (when your child needs to stop eating before their operation).

Please telephone the paediatric nurse practitioner (PNP) in the morning at 6am on **020 7188 7188** and ask for **bleep 0821** to confirm the date and time that you need to bring your child back into hospital. The PNP will also confirm fasting instructions and the details of the ward where your child will be staying.

Please note that we may not be able to give you a definite time for your child's operation as the operating theatre list is changeable and depends on other cases that may need to take priority. Occasionally operations may be delayed till later the same day or postponed till the following day.

If you have other children, you will need to make arrangements for them to be collected from school or looked after by someone else.

## Fasting or 'nil by mouth' instructions

The operation will take place under general anaesthetic, therefore 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 may find it useful to fill in the table below with the last times that your child can eat or drink.

	Hours before planned surgery	Time
Last food, fizzy drink or milk feed (including boiled sweets and chewing gum)	6	
Last breast feed	4	
Last drink of water or clear fluids	2	

It is important to follow these instructions. If there is food or liquid in your child's stomach during the anaesthetic, it could come up to the back of the throat and damage the lungs. If your child has any existing health conditions, such as diabetes or a metabolic condition, please ask the A&E staff for further advice about fasting.

If your child's operation is delayed for any reason, you will be informed and your child's nurse will ask the anaesthetist if the child can be given a drink of water or other clear fluid to prevent excessive thirst and dehydration.

## Medicines

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

## What should we bring?

Your child should remain in hospital for two to four 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
- does not have a high temperature
- is eating, drinking, and passing urine.

We suggest you pack a small overnight bag and wash bag in case your child needs to stay overnight. If this is the case, one parent may stay and sleep in the pull down parent bed next to your child's bed or on a cot on the ward.

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.

## Useful sources of 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.

**t:** 020 7188 3003 10am to 5pm, Monday to Friday      **e:** [letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk)

### Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

**t:** 020 7188 8801 (PALS)      **e:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk)

**t:** 020 7188 3514 (complaints)      **e:** [complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto: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 get in touch:

**t:** 020 7188 8815      **e:** [languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk)

### NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

**t:** 111

### NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

**w:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### Get involved and have your say: become a member of the Trust

Members of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust contribute to the organisation on a voluntary basis. We count on them for feedback, local knowledge and support. Membership is free and it is up to you how much you get involved. To find out more, and to become a member:

**t:** 0800 731 0319      **e:** [members@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:members@gstt.nhs.uk)      **w:** [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership)

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