Pediatric Surgery Tips

Surgery and hospitals can be scary for any child. As a parent, you may feel worried too. You can help prepare your child by answering their questions and listening to their fears. Here are a few simple tips:

- **Tell your child what to expect.** Use simple language. For example, you can say, “First you will go to the hospital to meet the people that will care for you. Next, you will change into hospital pajamas. Then, you will go to the operating room to fall asleep for your surgery. When the surgery is done, you will wake up.” You can always give more details if your child asks.
- **Help your child practice for anesthesia.** Ask your clinic for an anesthesia face mask. Have your child practice wearing it while they count to 30, sing a song or watch a short video.
- **Explain to your child how the surgery will help them.** Also, ask your child what they think will happen and how they feel about it. You can address any fears they have.
- **Encourage your child to make a list of questions to ask their doctor**. Your support can help your child feel involved in their own care.
- **Bring a comfort item.** Allow your child to bring a favorite stuffed animal, blanket, toy or comfort item to keep with them throughout the procedure.
- **Watch our surgery video.** Scan the QR code to view the video. You’ll learn what to expect before and after your child’s surgery. You can also use this link: https://uwhealth.org/kids-surgery-prep.

Staff at American Family Children’s Hospital are here to support you and your child.

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