If you require a translation please contact:

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اگر آپ کو اس کے ترجمے کی ضرورت در پیش ہو تو آپ ہم سے رجوع فرمائیں۔

আপনার যদি এই পত্রের অনুবাদের দরকার হয়,
তাহলে দয়া করে যোগাযোগ করুন ঃ

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PAEDIATIC ANAESTHESIA

Anaesthetic Department

PATIENT INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

This leaflet explains what to expect when your son/daughter comes into hospital to have an operation or investigation under general anaesthesia.

It is part of a series about anaesthetics and related topics written by a partnership of patient representatives, parents and anaesthetists. You can get these leaflets, and large print copies, from www.youranaesthetic.info.

WHAT IS ANAESTHESIA?

The word anaesthesia means loss of sensation. A general anaesthetic ensures that your child is unconscious and free of pain during a test (investigation) or operation. General anaesthesia is a state of controlled unconsciousness and freedom from pain.

Anaesthetics are the drugs (gases and injections) that are used to induce and maintain anaesthesia. Anaesthetists are specialist doctors who are responsible for the wellbeing of your child throughout surgery, and are also closely involved with your child's pain relief after surgery.

These are the latest times that you should give your son/daughter anything to eat or drink:

- 6 hours before your son/daughter can have a light meal, a glass of milk or a fizzy drink.
- Bottle fed babies can have formula feed.
- 4 hours before babies can have breast milk.
- 2 hours before all children and babies can have a drink of water or diluted cordial **but not** a fizzy drink.

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For practical reasons, the anaesthetist who comes to see you on the ward may not always be the same one who administers your child's anaesthetic, but the information you give them will be passed on.

DELAYING THE OPERATION OR INVESTIGATION

Occasionally the anaesthetist may learn something about your son/daughter that means it would be safer not to do the procedure on that day.

This could happen if your he/she has a bad cold, a temperature has a rash or has eaten food too recently.

NOTHING TO EAT AND DRINK, FASTING AND 'NIL BY MOUTH'

The hospital should give you clear instructions about fasting, and it is important for your son/daughter to follow these.

If there is food or liquid in your child's stomach during the anaesthetic, it could come up into the back of the throat and damage his or her lungs.

CHOICE

It is often possible for you and your child to choose how the anaesthetic and other medicines are given. Sometimes there are medical reasons why things have to be done in a certain way – these will be explained to you.

Nothing will happen unless you understand and agree with what has been planned. Your wishes and those of your child are very important. We want to work with you to provide the best possible care for your child and famil.

PREPARATION

There are many things that you can do to prepare your child for coming into hospital. All children (except infants too young to understand) should be told:

- that they are going into hospital
- that they will be having an operation or investigation
- some basic information about what will happen to them when they are in hospital.

Everything should be explained to your child in a way that he/she can understand. Many hospitals have play staff who can give explanations and encourage discussion through play.

TIMING

Children between 2 and 3 years of age should be told 2 – 3 days before and again on the day of admission.

Children between 4 and 7 years of age should be told 4 – 7 days before the day of admission.

Older children will usually be involved in making decisions about the operation or investigation and discussion can take place a few weeks before the day of admission.

Many hospitals have times when you and your child can visit the ward and operating theatres before the day of admission.

SOME IDEAS OF WHAT TO SAY:

Explain that the operation or investigation will help your son/daughter to get better. Use simple words that he/she will understand.

Do encourage your child to talk about the operation and ask questions. Books, games and stories can help. Tell your child about timing – when he/she will have the operation or investigation and how long their stay in hospital will be.

If your child will be staying in hospital overnight, let him/her know if you will be able to stay too. Some hospitals provide accommodation for parents away from the ward, others provide a folding bed adjacent to your child.

If it is not possible for you to stay with your son/daughter, it is important that you explain to him/her when you will be able to visit.

Your child can help pack his or her own bag and decide which nightclothes and toys to bring.

Please let us know in advance any special requirements your son/daughter has and we will do whatever we can to help.

Please phone the hospital if your son/daughter develops a severe cough or cold, or has contact with chicken pox shortly before the day of the operation or investigation.

A PRE-OPERATIVE VISIT

An anaesthetist should visit you on the ward before the procedure to discuss your son/daughter's anaesthetic. The anaesthetist needs to find out about his/her general health, previous experiences of anaesthesia, any medicines prescribed and any allergies he/she might have.

This is a good time to talk about any previous experiences your child has had with injections or hospitals, or any particular concerns you have about this visit.

You may find it helpful to make a list of questions you want to ask.