

Preparing Your Child for Surgery

For parents and guardians

Royal Columbian Hospital

This booklet belongs to:

When to check in at the hospital

Date:

Time:

Surgery Time

Date:

Time:

The doctor doing the surgery (surgeon)

Office phone number

Call the surgeon's office right away if...

- Your child has any of these within 72 hours (3 days) of the surgery:
 - a rash
 - a fever over 38°C (100°F)
 - a cough or wheezy breathing
 - feel sick or look unwell
 - throwing up (vomiting)
 - watery poop (diarrhea)
- Your child has been exposed to someone within 72 hours (3 days) of the surgery who has a virus such as the measles, mumps, chicken pox, or COVID-19.

My child can breastfeed / have breast milk until:

My child can eat up until:

My child can drink clear fluids up until:

**If you do not follow these instructions,
your surgery could be cancelled and rescheduled for another date**

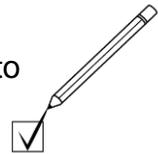


Sometimes we have to change when we do a person's surgery because of unexpected events and emergencies.

We review all options before deciding to delay anyone's surgery. We let you know as soon as possible.

If we cancel your child's surgery, your surgeon's office will call to reschedule the surgery for another day.

Use the check boxes in this booklet to keep track of what you need to do and what you have done.



We look forward to meeting your child and you!

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Royal Columbian Hospital

How to help your child get ready

Be honest with your child about why they are coming to the hospital. Tell your child that they are having an operation or surgery (use whichever term is more familiar to them).

Give simple explanations. Offer choices when possible. Encourage play as a way to let them show how they feel about their surgery.



Toddler
(age 2 to 3 years)

Begin talking to your child about their surgery 1 to 2 days before their surgery date.

Use simple words to talk about how the operation is going to make their body feel better. (*"The doctor is going to fix your arm."*)



Pre-schooler
(age 3 to 4 years)

Begin talking to your child about their surgery 3 to 4 days before their surgery date.

Use simple words about what body part is being fixed.

Limit what you explain to just what your child will be awake for and experience.



School-age
(age 5 to 12 years)

Begin talking to your child about their surgery 1 to 2 weeks before their surgery date.

Explain what your child can expect. Use the 5 senses to tell them what they will feel, see, hear, smell, and taste.

It is normal for children to have some anxiety. This is okay. Make a plan for how your child will cope.



Teen
(13 to 17 years)

Talk to your teen about their surgery as soon as you know about the surgery.

Involve your teen in the process, identify concerns, and make a plan with your teen for how they will cope.

For more tips on how to prepare your child, see [Preparing for surgery and hospitalization](#) at About Kids Health (aboutkidshealth.ca) or scan this QR code to the page.



To help prepare older children, ask us for our booklet 'Getting Ready for My Surgery'.

How to prepare yourself

You are the most important person on your child's care team. We know that having a child go through surgery can be challenging and stressful. We encourage you to think about how others can help you.

Find out as much as possible about the surgery. If you know what to expect, you will be better able to prepare your child.

Write your questions down and bring them with you. Any time during your time with us, it is okay to ask us about anything we are doing or saying.

You might have chosen to prepare with your child and not eaten the day of the surgery. If so, then we encourage you to eat something while your child is having their surgery.

Look after yourself. While your child is having surgery, go for a walk. Bring a book or device to help you pass the time while you wait.

Plan ahead

- Ask the surgeon about medicines and any special equipment your child might need after surgery.
- Have a child's thermometer that works and is easy to use.
- Think about the kinds of food and drink your child might want to have at home while they recover.
 - Your child might feel sick to their stomach. Have things that can help settle the stomach such as plain toast, rice, plain crackers, ginger ale, and congee.
 - Your child might have a sore throat. Have foods that are easy to swallow such as popsicles, soup, applesauce, yogurt, and pudding.
- It is best not to smoke or vape around your child.
 - Second-hand smoke can slow down your child's healing and recovery.
- Bring any of your own medications and supplies with you to the hospital in case the day is longer than you planned.
- After surgery, plan for a quiet day or two at home with a parent, guardian, or trusted adult who can stay with them. Consider arranging childcare for other children, if possible.



Preparing for the Surgery

Checklist for getting ready

- Ask the doctor doing the surgery (your surgeon):
 - what medicine and/or vitamins your child should take up until the surgery
 - what medicines your child might need to take after the surgery (such as acetaminophen [Tylenol] or ibuprofen [Advil or Motrin]) so you can make sure you have some at home
 - if your child will need any special equipment (like crutches) so you can arrange to get it ahead of time



- Arrange for transport to and from the hospital.
For your child's safety and comfort, try not use public transport. You might want someone else to drive so you can focus on caring for your child.



Check where to park at the hospital.
Pay for at least 4 hours of parking

- Arrange for a trusted adult to stay with your child for the first 24 hour after surgery (if you are not available).

- Stop** any shaving, waxing, threading, or using any other method of removing hair from around the area where your child is having surgery.



- Remove nail polish, gel or acrylic nails, nail add-ons, and false nails from your child's fingers and toes before the surgery.

- If your child has piercings that need a special tool to take them out, arrange to have those removed (including piercings of the lip, tongue, and nose).

- If you and your child don't speak or understand English well enough for medical conversations, we can arrange for a medical interpreter to be there the day of your surgery. Let your surgeon's office know who will then let us know.

Your safety is important. Any metal on your skin can cause burns or injury during surgery.

Nail polish, nail add-ons, and false nails are places where germs grow.

For older children

- For 72 hours (3 days) before surgery, **it is best that your child not drink any alcohol or use any drugs.**

- Alcohol and drugs can change how the medicines we give work.



Skin Cleaning before Surgery

- Get what you need from the pharmacy to clean your child's skin before surgery. (We tell you what you need)
- Clean your child's skin as instructed. Wash your child's hair. Make sure you remove all their jewellery and piercings before cleaning your child's skin.



If you didn't get any special instructions:

Make sure your child has a bath or shower with soap and water **the night before** surgery. Make sure their hair is washed as well.

- Do not** put any products on your child's skin (such as deodorant, lotion, make-up, nail polish, cologne/perfume, or powder).

Eating and drinking before surgery

- Your child can eat and drink, as they normally would, up until 6 hours before hospital check-in time. Nothing to eat after this time.
- If your child is breastfeeding, they can drink breast milk up until 4 hours before hospital check-in time.
- Your child can only drink only water and clear apple juice up until 1 hour before hospital check-in time.



After this, **your child must not drink anything.**

No chewing gum, mints, or candies.



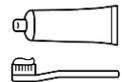
If your child has diabetes, follow the instructions given to you.

The last time your child can drink any water or apple juice is **1 hour before** hospital check-in time.



Before coming to the hospital

- Brush your child's teeth, tongue, and roof of mouth.



What to bring to the hospital

- Your BC Services Card / BC Care Card (personal health number)
- A list of all the medicines your child is currently taking
- A favourite stuffed toy, blanket, and/or book
- For younger children, a pacifier or usual sippy cup (unless they are having dental or tonsil/adenoid surgery)
- Loose comfortable clothes to wear home
- Non-slip shoes or slippers that are easy to put on
- Eye glasses and case
- Any health devices your child uses (such as hearing aid(s), limb braces, dental devices, feeding tubes)
- Walking aid(s) your child uses such as cane, walker, or wheelchair
- Your child's diabetes medicine and glucose monitor
- _____



If staying in the hospital:

- Pyjamas
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Any medicines your child currently takes
- _____

Note: On the day of surgery, we give your child a plastic bag with their name on it for their clothes and shoes. We give the bag to you.

Leave all valuables at home.

The hospital is a public building. Valuables can go missing.

We are not responsible for any lost or stolen items.

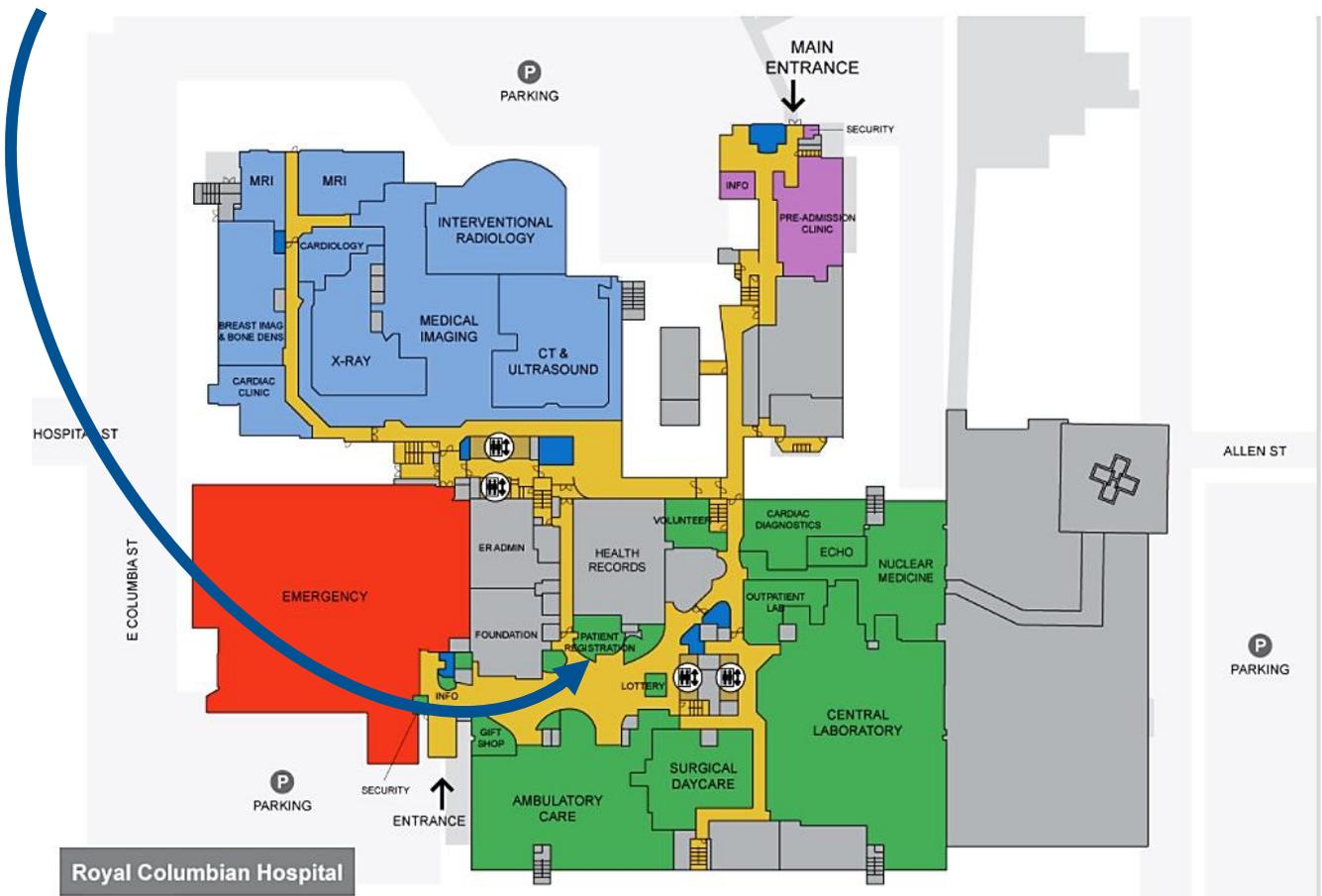
The Day of Surgery

Where to go – Royal Columbian Hospital

330 East Columbia Street
New Westminster, B.C.

Report to **Patient Registration** at your hospital 'Check-in Time'.

Patient Registration is located in the **Health Care Centre (Green Zone)**.



Level 1 map

What to expect before surgery

- You are met by a nurse who:
 - Gives your child a hospital gown to change into.
 - Checks your child's blood pressure, pulse, temperature, height, and weight.
 - Might start an intravenous, usually in one of your child's hands or arms.
- You and your child meet the doctors and nurses who take part in the surgery. They ask you or your child:
 - what medicines your child might be taking
 - when your child last ate food and last drank water or juice
 - what questions you and your child might have



Intravenous

(say *in-truh-vee-nus*)

Also called an 'I.V.'

(say *eye-vee*)

It is a tiny soft tube placed inside a vein. We use this to give fluids and medicine during surgery.

We can put numbing cream on the spot before so it doesn't hurt too much as we put it in.

If your child feels nervous, let us know. We can help them.

- The doctor doing the surgery (the surgeon) might mark your child's skin with a special pen. This tells everyone the part of your child's body we are doing the surgery.
- Usually, you can go with your child into the Operating Room and stay until we are ready to start the surgery.
- **Once in the Operating Room**, you will hear us go through a **safety check**.
 - We will ask you and/or your child to take part in this safety check by telling us your child's name and the kind of surgery we are doing. We do this to confirm we are doing the correct surgery on the correct person.
 - We will ask your child to remove their glasses and other health devices – depending on the type of surgery.



Waiting Areas for parents / guardians

- We let you know where you can wait while your child is having surgery.

After Surgery

Managing pain

- Most children have some pain after surgery. While in the hospital, tell the nurse if your child is having any pain. We want your child to be comfortable.
- If you have any questions about how best to manage your child's pain at home or the pain medicines, ask your nurse or surgeon.



Feeling sick to your stomach

- Sometimes children feel sick to their stomach or throw up after surgery. We can give you medicine to settle their stomach.



Drinking and eating

- It is best to start with ice chips, sips of water and/or juice, or popsicles.
- Some children can have a small snack after surgery. If your child is breastfed, ask your nurse when you can breastfeed.



Going home

Your child is ready to go when:

- ✓ Your child can sit up and move around.
- ✓ Your child's pain is at a level that allows them to move about.
- ✓ Your child's stomach has settled so they don't feel really sick to their stomach.
- ✓ A trusted, responsible adult is available to stay with your child for the next 24 hours.
- ✓ Your surgeon and nurse tell you it is okay for you to go home.

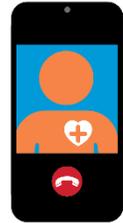


At Home

Please read the information we give you about your child's specific surgery.

Call your surgeon or family practitioner if:

- Your child has a fever over 38°C (100°F).
- Your child's incision is warm, red, swollen, or has blood or pus (yellow or green fluid) draining from it.
- Your child is having a hard time peeing (urinating) or has not gone pee within 8 hours after surgery.
- Your child's pain does not get less with pain medicine, or the pain stops them from moving and recovering.
- Your child is throwing up or not able to keep fluids down.



If you cannot contact your surgeon or family practitioner:

▶ Call Fraser Health Virtual Care, 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., daily, **1-800-314-0999**
fraserhealth.ca/virtualcare

▶ Call **8-1-1** (HealthLinkBC) to speak to a registered nurse any time - day or night.

Available in 130 languages.
 For an interpreter, say your language in English. Wait until an interpreter comes on the phone.

Questions I have...

About Royal Columbian Hospital

Smoke-, Scent- and Latex-Free:



For the health and safety of everyone, we are smoke-, scent-, and latex-free. Smoking is not allowed within the hospital or on our surrounding property.

We ask that you and your visitor not wear or use any scented products (such as perfumes, aftershaves, or colognes).

Please do not bring in any heavily scented flowers like lilies or lilacs. Only Mylar balloons are allowed. No latex balloons or other latex products.

Security:



Everyone who works or volunteers in the hospital wears identification with their photo, name, and title.

The hospital has 24-hour security. Uniformed guards routinely patrol the building and surrounding property.

Cafeteria: Located in the basement of the Health Care Centre (Green Zone). They offer a variety of meals, snacks, and drinks. Vending machines with snacks and drinks are throughout the hospital.



Patient Resource Centre: Located in the Health Care Centre, main floor (Green Zone). We have information on a variety of health related topics, computers, and Wi-Fi here.



Gift Shop: Located on the main level of the Health Care Centre (Green Zone).



Parking and Transit: Parking on the hospital site is limited. Imperial Parking monitors the parking. The surrounding neighborhood has strict parking restrictions. Buses stop outside the hospital. The Sapperton SkyTrain Station is nearby.



www.fraserhealth.ca

This information does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.

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To order: patienteduc.fraserhealth.ca

