

Ophthalmology

Getting ready for Surgery

Unfortunately waiting times have increased due to the Covid-19 social distancing regulations necessary on the hospital site, and because, during the pandemic, we have been providing additional services to other hospitals in the region. As a result, the number of patients we would normally see has been limited.

We are now working hard to ensure that children and young people get the care they need as quickly as possible.

While you are waiting, you can use any extra time in a positive way to ensure your child is as healthy as possible before their surgery.

This can reduce the risk of complications, support their recovery and benefit their long-term health. Here are the ways that your child and whole family can put yourself in the best possible place to have your surgery.



Introduction

The intention of this document is to provide some general guidance for you to ensure that your child is in the best possible state of health prior to their surgery with us.

If your child has concerns or is likely to be frightened on the day of surgery, please let us know and we will aim to provide additional support. Specialist play therapists are available and they can assist your child in their hospital journey.

Please bring a list of any medications your child is taking and discuss these with the team on the day of surgery. Certain types of medicines may need to be stopped for clinical reasons, including the combined oral contraceptive pill and certain anti-coagulant therapies up to six weeks before surgery. If you are on one of these medications, please contact pre-operative care team using the details below for advice.



By your side

If your child develops a cold, has an infection or is unwell before their admission please let us know. Please contact us on the numbers listed at the end of this guide.

It may be helpful for you to inform any professional involved in your child's care/schooling of the surgery to allow them to plan for your child's recovery.

Guidance for Parents

There are a number of things that you can do to ensure your child is as healthy as possible prior to their surgery. These include:-

Eating more healthily – A healthy diet is important to a child's development, and even more important prior to surgery. Preventing iron deficiency can reduce the risk of requiring a blood transfusion and improve recovery after surgery. Iron rich diets are the best way to achieve this, although sometimes iron supplements are necessary to top up iron levels.

Getting control of asthma – Asthma is common in childhood and if poorly controlled can cause problems during the anaesthetic. An assessment of the level of control can be made using the Asthma Control Test (www.asthmacontroltest.com). If support or improvements are required please seek advice from your GP or practice asthma nurse.

Creating a smoke-free home – Children who are exposed to environmental tobacco smoke are twice as likely to suffer airway or breathing problems during or after the operation. If you, or a family member, would like support stopping smoking visit the NHS website for advice and support. <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/>

Keeping teeth healthy – Dental decay impacts on children's wellbeing, school attendance and can increase post-operative chest infections. It's important to have your child's teeth checked twice each year and brush their teeth twice each day with 14,500 ppm fluoride toothpaste. The dentist will be able to apply a fluoride varnish 2 – 3 times per year to reduce the risk of cavities developing. Should any problems or pain arise please contact your dentist.

Getting the right vaccinations – It's important that children and adults have vaccinations at the right time for the best protection. If you or your child have missed a vaccine, contact your GP to catch up.

Moving more – National guidelines for physical activity recommend 180 minutes per day for pre-schoolers and 60 minutes per day for school-age children. <https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/>

Having a health check – If your child is over 14 years of age and has a learning disability, they can have a free annual health check at your GP surgery.



We have a learning disability team that will be able to support your child prior to their admission, if you would benefit from this please get in touch with our team.

bwc.learningdisabilityliaison@nhs.net or 0121 333 6283

What to bring in on admission

- Patients may bring in nightwear and a change of clothes.
- Comfortable, loose clothing for discharge.
- A changing bag, to include anything you baby or child will need (nappies, bottles, beakers, toys etc.)
- Toiletries, including any sanitary products your child may need
- Please bring your child's regular medications.
- If hoists are used, please bring slings.
- Patients on non-invasive ventilation please bring along your equipment and or cough assist.
- You may bring along feeds for gastrostomy fed children; the Trust offers feeds for patients and will provide the pump and equipment.
- You may bring along laptops/games, phones and headphones etc. although please inform staff when you wish to charge any batteries to avoid fire hazards



What to do if you are concerned about your child's eyes

It is important to continue all treatments relating to your child's eye care, whilst waiting for surgery. This includes the use of eye drops, wearing glasses and wearing patches.

If you are concerned that your child's eyes have deteriorated whilst waiting for surgery, please contact the eye department on 0121 333 9467 or bwc.eyedepartment@nhs.net It can be helpful if you can take photographs or videos of your child's eyes, if you are able to see the problem.

If your child's symptoms have improved and you wish to be removed from the hospital waiting list, please call your doctor's secretary on 0121 333 9999.

If you have an emergency, you can attend the Accident and Emergency department at Birmingham Midlands Eye Centre.

If you want to discuss any of the above with a member of the pre-operative care team either send an email to bwc.preadmissions@nhs.net or call 0121 333 9543.



Useful links

- Link to BWC webpage <https://bwc.nhs.uk/your-operation>
- Preadmission leaflet <https://bwc.nhs.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jjm4n1739.pdf&ver=2022>
- Link to Royal college of anaesthetists <https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/patient-information/patient-information-resources/information-children-parents-carers>
- Parent leaflet about GA: <https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/patient-information/patient-information-resources/information-children-parents-carers>
- School age leaflet about GA: <https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2022-03/DavyDetective2014web.pdf>
- Teenager leaflet about GA: <https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2022-03/TeenGuide2021web.pdf>
- Pre-school leaflet about GA: <https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2022-03/07-ChildsAnaesthetic2020web.pdf>
- Teenager webpage: <https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2022-03/YAYA-YoungPersonsGuide2018web.pdf>

