



Paediatric information: for parents

# Your child's day-case surgery

Coming into hospital can be an anxious time for you and your child. We hope that this leaflet will help you know what to expect. Please feel free to ask us for advice and further explanation.

## What is day case surgery?

Day case surgery is where a patient is admitted, has their operation and is discharged on the same day. This will usually mean a full day spent in the hospital – for example, from 7.30am to 6pm. Children are unable to stay overnight in Moorfields Eye Hospital.

## Pre-operative assessment

At the end of your clinic appointment, once a date has been agreed for your child's operation, the nurse will do a pre-operative assessment. He or she will give you and your child information about what will happen on the ward and will answer any questions that you have. You will also be advised about fasting instructions (when to stop eating and drinking) before the surgery.

If you are unable to stay after your child's clinic appointment you can come to the children's ward another day for a face to face pre-operative assessment. You can also call the ward on 020 7566

2595 for an assessment over the phone. Rarely, we will ask for a family to come back to the hospital for this assessment.

If your child has any changes to their general health or becomes ill with a cold, cough, chest infection or disease such as chickenpox before their admission, please phone the ward for advice on 020 7566 2595. We advise you to phone between 10am and 5pm, Monday-Friday for non-urgent advice or from 7.30am if it is urgent. The ward is not open at night or on bank holidays.

## Preparing your child for surgery

It is important for you to explain to your child – simply and truthfully – what will happen a few days before the surgery. Explanations should be appropriate to your child's level of understanding. Including brothers and sisters in this discussion is important too; depending on their age, they might well be able to help.

When talking with your child, you could give a brief, simple explanation using phrases such as "special sleep" for anaesthetic. You can tell him/her that when the special sleep is over, their



eye will feel a little uncomfortable and sore, but that the discomfort will not last very long because their eye has been made better. You can also tell them about the doctors who sometimes wear coloured theatre clothes with special paper hats and nurses with different coloured tops. Explain that they are there to help people get better.

Allow your child to set the pace of the discussion and answer them according to their level of understanding. It is always better to answer questions as truthfully as you can and we will try and do this too. We also understand that this is something that is easier said than done.

### **What to bring with you on the day of surgery**

Please bring along all medication that your child is taking. We provide brightly coloured theatre gowns for children to wear during the operation. If your child prefers to wear their own pyjamas/nightie/dressing gown, you are welcome to bring these along. Please note-the pyjamas and nighties must be cotton with no metal poppers or studs. Make sure you bring your child's favourite toy or cuddly blanket—even if it is old or worn! Remember to mark them with your child's name as the hospital cannot accept responsibility for lost clothing and other belongings.

### **Important information**

- Please ensure that you follow the fasting instructions given by the

nurse or doctor carefully. Your child will not be allowed to eat or drink for some time before the surgery – if he or she does, the anaesthetic will have to be cancelled. This is because 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.

- If you give your baby formula milk, please make sure this has already been prepared.
- If your child has special dietary needs such as kosher, halal, gluten-free or purees, please bring the appropriate snacks with you and discuss this with the nurse who admits your child. Please be aware that we are unable to cook, reheat or store any food for patients or their families in a fridge.
- Baby feeds will be warmed in a jug of hot water, not in a microwave.
- There is a small cafe open from 9am-4pm where you can buy hot and cold drinks and snacks for yourself. We will give your child snacks and a drink on the ward when they have recovered from the anaesthetic. If your child has special dietary needs, please



bring your own snacks for your child.

- Please check with the nurses before giving drinks and food to your child after their return to the ward and please do not offer food or drinks to other children. This is because they could be waiting for surgery and would not be allowed to eat or drink.
- Please do not bring electrical appliances that need plugging into an electrical socket. We are happy for you to bring laptops or games powered by batteries, but please be aware that it will be your responsibility to keep these items safe during your visit.

### Before the surgery

Please arrive on the ward at the time given in your admission letter. Each child is separately assessed and admitted while with their parent/guardian. Your child must be come with a mother, father or guardian with legal parental responsibility.

You and your child will meet the surgeon who will discuss the operation and get your consent. We need to know if a family member has an infection as this could affect your child's anaesthetic or surgery.

You will also meet the anaesthetist who will explain the type of anaesthetic and pain relief that your child is going to be

given. We understand that parents sometimes forget about something they mean to ask, so please do not hesitate to ask the nurses any questions you may have at a later point.

**You will need to stay with your child on the ward during their preparation for surgery and also during their recovery after the operation.**

### After the surgery

Your child will need to stay on the ward until they have recovered from the anaesthetic and surgery. If while on the ward he/she is in any discomfort after their operation, the nurses will provide appropriate pain relief.

For your child's safety, side frames need to be left up on beds and cots at all times.

We will discharge your child once he/she can drink water or squash without being sick. **Snacks such as sandwiches, fruit, yoghurts and ice creams** are also provided by the ward staff.

There is a playroom staffed by a play specialist, which has Wii games, children's DVDs, toys, books and other activities such as painting and drawing. If your child is older they might want to bring a book or a suitable electronic game along with them.

### Going home

Necessary travelling arrangements should be made before your child is admitted for surgery. Please avoid using the tube to travel home with your child after their surgery.



We advise that you arrange for brothers and sisters to be collected from school or nursery by a friend or relative. Unfortunately, we are unable to predict your child's exact time of discharge as all children recover differently from having anaesthetic.

When your child is able to go home, the nurse will give you information about his/her care and an emergency telephone number. You will also be given a supply of any medication required and advice about your child's follow up appointment in the outpatient clinic. A ward nurse will phone you on the first working day following your child's operation to check whether you have any problems and to give advice if needed.

Please make sure that you have a supply of paracetamol/calpol appropriate for your child's age in case your child has any discomfort after they are discharged.

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**Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust**  
**City Road, London EC1V 2PD**  
**Phone: 020 7253 3411**  
**[www.moorfields.nhs.uk](http://www.moorfields.nhs.uk)**

### **Moorfields Direct telephone helpline**

Phone: 020 7566 2345  
Monday-Friday, 8.30am-9pm  
Saturday, 9am-5pm  
Information and advice on eye conditions and treatments from experienced ophthalmic-trained nurses.

### **Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)**

Phone: 020 7566 2324/ 020 7566 2325  
Email: [moorfields.pals@nhs.net](mailto:moorfields.pals@nhs.net)  
Moorfields' PALS team provides confidential advice and support to help you with any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available at Moorfields. The PALS team can also advise you on how to make a complaint.

### **Your right to treatment within 18 weeks**

Under the NHS constitution, all patients have the right to begin consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of being referred by their GP. Moorfields is committed to fulfilling this right, but if you feel that we have failed to do so, please contact our patient advice and liaison service (PALS) who will be able to advise you further (see above). For more information about your rights under the NHS constitution, visit [www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs](http://www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs)

