

What to expect on the day of surgery

Outlined below is an overview of key steps to expect on the day of surgery. Please keep in mind, everyone's surgical journey is different and may look different depending on the hospital you are at. [This is what the experience may look like at SickKids](#). For more detailed information, please see the following pages.

1 Arrival at Check-in/Registration Desk (if you are coming from home)

Check in at the Registration Desk if you are coming from home. Your child will be given an ID bracelet that they must wear for their entire hospital stay.

2 Waiting Room

You and your child will wait in the pre-op waiting area before surgery. Bring activities to help pass the time.

3 Pre-Op Check

You and your child will be taken from the waiting area for a health check and to discuss the surgery and anesthesia with the health-care team.

4 Waiting Room

You and your child may need to return to the waiting area after the health check.

5 Operating Room (OR)

Your child will be taken to the OR by members of the health-care team. Ask the team if you are able to accompany your child to the OR.

6 During Surgery

You will wait in a designated waiting area while your child is in surgery. A member of the health-care team will come find you when the surgery is finished.

7 PACU (Post-Anesthetic Care Unit)

After surgery, your child will be moved to the PACU and you will be able to visit them once they are awake.

What to expect on the day of surgery

Outlined below is a detailed overview of key steps to expect on the day of surgery.

1 Arrival at Check-in/Registration Desk (if you are coming from home)

- Parking is usually available near the hospital. Ensure you allow enough time to find a parking spot prior to check-in.
- Check in at the Registration Desk.
- Your child will be given an ID bracelet with their name and birth date on it. Please ensure they wear it as your health-care team will ask to see it many times throughout the day.
- Your child will be given a hospital gown or pajamas to change into.
- Before you put these on, remember to use the hospital pre-op wipes, if provided. Watch [this video](#) for more information.
- Your child's height and weight will be taken. This is important to ensure the medications they are given will be the correct dosage.

If you are coming to surgery directly from another area of the hospital, you will be brought to surgery in a bed or wheelchair and go directly to the pre-op area.

2 Waiting Room

- You and your child will wait in the pre-op area before their surgery.
- There will be other patients and families waiting for surgery as well.
- It can sometimes be a long wait. It is helpful to bring [activities](#) to help pass the time.
- [Strategies](#) to feel calm coming for surgery

3 Pre-Op Check

- From the waiting room you and your child will be taken to an area where a health-care team member will:
 - Complete a health check by listening to your child's heart, lungs, and/or stomach with a stethoscope
 - Take your child's temperature with a thermometer
 - Check your child's blood pressure and heart rate
 - Complete any other remaining tests for your child including bloodwork
 - Your child may receive an IV (intravenous) line at this stage
- Your health-care providers, including your surgeon and anesthesiologist, will speak to you about your child's surgery and anesthesia and answer any questions you have.
- During this assessment your pre-op nurse and anesthesiologist will talk to you about the calming medication options.
 - If you receive calming medication (sedation) while waiting for surgery, it is important to stay on the stretcher, bed, chair, or stroller

4 Waiting Room

- You and your child may have to wait a little longer in the waiting room while the health-care team prepares for your child's surgery.
 - Here your child will say goodbye to you and any other family members

5 Operating Room (OR)

- An OR nurse will come to meet you and your child to complete any final assessments.
- Your child will be brought to the OR for their surgery by members of the health-care team
- Hospitals may allow parents/caregivers to walk children into the operating room. Talk to your health-care team to discuss this option.

6 During Surgery

- While your child is in surgery you will wait in the waiting area. This may be a different area to the pre-op waiting area. A hospital volunteer/health-care team member will show you where to go.
- It is important to take care of yourself as well when your child is having surgery. [Here](#) is a resource for you to consider for what you can do while your child is in surgery.
- Following your child's surgery, the health-care provider will come to the surgical waiting room to talk to you about the surgery and follow up care.

7 PACU (Post-Anesthetic Care Unit)

- When your child's surgery is finished their surgery, they will move to the PACU. Here they will wake up and start to recover.
- Your child will wait here until they are fully awake
- A parent/caregiver will be able to come and visit them
- Similar to the Pre-Op Check-Up your child will have a Post-Op Check-Up where a health-care team member will:
 - Listen to their heart, lungs, and/or stomach with a stethoscope
 - Take their temperature with a thermometer
 - Check their blood pressure and pulse
 - Monitor for signs of pain and/or discomfort
 - Complete any other remaining tests
 - Encourage your child to drink as instructed
- Your child will be discharged to home or they will be moved to a room on the hospital floor (if they are required to stay overnight at the hospital).