Let’s Get Ready for Surgery

UnityPoint Health

A step-by-step guide to outpatient surgery for kids.
Hi! My name is Simone. I am 8 years old. I like to color and play board games with my family. When I went to my doctor he told my Mom and me I needed to have surgery to help me feel better.

So the next week we went to UnityPoint Health for my surgery. We met lots of nice people. They were all very friendly and helped me get ready for surgery.
When my mom took me to the hospital the friendly woman at the desk gave both of us bracelets with my name on them. We wore them the whole time we were at the hospital. I even got to bring my bracelet home with me after my surgery!
I sat in the waiting room for a short time and watched T.V. and played with a really cool maze toy with my Mom.

Then I met the Child Life Specialist. She told me all about the things I might see, hear and feel during my visit to the hospital. She explained things to me and answered my questions so I knew what was going to happen.

She also gave me a teddy bear that I named Beary! Beary got a name bracelet too! She told me Beary could even stay with me during surgery.
Then I went into a special room called the surgery prep room. The friendly nurse had me sit in a nice cozy chair and asked if I had any questions. She gave me a warm colorful blanket that kept me comfy. The pretty blanket went with Beary the bear and me to surgery. And I got to bring my new blanket home with me!!!
Next, the nurse told me she needed to check to see how my body was working. This is called checking my vitals. I had done most of these things before at my doctor’s office so it was easy for me to help. The nurse put a soft wrap on my upper arm that gave my arm a hug. The soft wrap is called a blood pressure cuff. This told my nurse how fast my heart was beating.

Then the nurse asked me to put my finger inside a white plastic clip with a red light inside. This is called a pulse oximeter. This told my nurse how much oxygen was in my body.
Next she checked my temperature to make sure I did not have a fever. She gently touched my forehead with the thermometer and rolled it behind my ear. The nurse showed me what my temperature was when she was all done.

Then my friendly nurse had me step on a scale so she could weigh me. She also put a colorful sticker on my bracelet when she was done. My nurse said she was all done checking to see how my body was working. That was easy!
Then the nurse had me change into my hospital pajamas. The hospital pajamas are kind of silly because they tie in the back! Lots of people who work in the hospital wear pajamas too! The nurse said they are called scrubs. Hospital workers wear these special pajamas because they are the cleanest clothes in the world. They are comfortable too, just like my pjs!
I saw my doctor, the one who was going to do my surgery. He asked if I had any questions. Then he said he was going to get into his scrubs and would meet me back in the surgery room.

Next I met the sleep doctor. He is called an anesthesiologist. He said I would not feel anything during surgery because he would give me medicine to help me stay asleep the whole time. He listened to my heart and lungs and asked me to open my mouth real wide and stick out my tongue!
It was then time for me to go for my surgery. I got to pick how I wanted to ride to surgery! I could drive a special kids car, ride on a wheelchair, or go in a fun wagon! I picked the red wagon. Next it was time to say good-bye to my mom. She gave me a big hug and said she would see me soon. The nurse pulled me down the hall until we got to the surgery door. Getting a ride in the wagon was fun and my teddy bear, Beary, got to go with me too!
Once I was in the Operating Room I saw lots of people. They were all wearing blue pajamas and blue hats with masks over their nose and mouth. I was not afraid because I knew they were all friendly nurses and doctors and the mask was used to keep me from getting any germs.

The sleep nurse then let me hold a special mask over my face. The mask had the smell of strawberries. That was the flavor I chose! The flavored air is what helped me go to sleep.

Note to parents:
I.V. insertion either prior to or after your child is asleep is determined by your child’s anesthesiologist, with your child’s well-being and safety being their utmost concern.
The next thing I remember, the sleep doctor was waking me up telling me my surgery was all done. I noticed I had a bandage on my hand and under it was an IV. The IV is a small plastic straw that gave me water and medicine while I was sleeping during my surgery. It did not hurt at all, but it was funny to see it taped to me when I woke up.

I remember I felt a little tired and a little funny. The nurse told me that feeling funny was normal and that I would feel better very soon.

The nurse also told me I had a very important job. It was to keep telling her how I felt.
When I woke up a little more I got to see mom, choose a drink and a snack. I picked a grape Popsicle, juice and crackers. The Popsicle was cold and felt good on my throat. I also watched cartoons on TV!

The nurse talked to my Mom about how to take care of me at home. After my snack, the nurse took the tape and IV off my hand. It felt like a Band-Aid coming off. I got dressed and got ready to go home! The day of my surgery went by very fast. I can hardly wait to share my story with my teacher and friends at school!
People I Met

The Receptionists
Child Life Specialist
Surgery Prep Nurse

Anesthesiologist
Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA)
Recovery Nurse

Things I Saw

Blood Pressure Cuff
Pulse Oximeter
Thermometer

Stethoscope
Induction Mask
IV Pole
I sure met lots of nice people at UnityPoint Health! Everyone was really nice and friendly. They said that they were a team that worked together to make sure I was safe and comfortable the whole time I was a patient at UnityPoint.
Pediatric Pre-Surgical Tour at UnityPoint Health

Your child is scheduled to have surgery at UnityPoint Health and he/she may have some questions. We invite you and your child to attend our Pediatric Pre-Surgical Tour program for children ages 3-12 years old. During your visit you and your child will become more familiar with things you'll see and do on the actual day of surgery.

What will we do on the tour?
• Meet a UnityPoint Child Life Specialist and/or Surgical Prep Nurse
• Play in the Pediatric Play Space located in SurgiCare
• Participate in medical play— allowing your child to familiarize themselves with some of the medical clothes and equipment they will come into contact with on the day of their surgery
• Visit a Pre-Op patient room to explore a blood pressure cuff, pulse ox sensor, and see the special hospital clothes they will wear
• Visit the recovery area where children are reunited with parents following surgery
• Meet some medical team members taking care of your child during your stay at UnityPoint Health

What else do I need to know?
Pre-Surgical tours are a FREE service provided by UnityPoint. Tours should be scheduled as close to the hospital visit as possible. Appointments must be made in advance. If you are planning to attend the Pediatric Pre-Surgical Tour Program, please contact the Child Life Specialist at (309) 671-2145. If you or your child requires additional assistance for a Pre-Surgical Tour, or on the day of surgery, please let us know how we can best meet your unique needs.

Visit our Pediatric Surgery page on unitypoint.org/peoria to learn more about surgery at UnityPoint. There is helpful information available for parents about the day before, day of, and day after surgery. “Comfort and care for you and your child”

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