

# A GUIDE FOR FAMILIES

Pediatric Surgery



**LOGAN**  
HEALTH

**Children's**

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## Welcome to Logan Health Children's

Logan Health Children's is committed to child-centered care that serves the needs of our state's children and families. We have assembled a team of pediatric providers, a support staff of skilled professionals, a wide range of pediatric services and new facilities to serve children in their home state.

Montana families deserve excellent care for their children and should not suffer the burden and expense of traveling out of state for health care. Our pediatric specialist team has chosen to live and work in the Flathead Valley, raising their families alongside the families they serve. We are committed to protecting the health of our community's most valuable resource – its children.

Thank you for choosing Logan Health Children's.  
Your child is in good hands.

## Why is it important to have a pediatric surgeon?

Pediatric specialists have chosen to make caring for children the core of their medical practice. They have received advanced training in their specialty and are fellowship trained in their subspecialty.

You can be assured that your pediatric surgical team has a wide range of treatment options and expertise in working with children and treating surgical disorders.



# Getting ready for surgery

## Prior to surgery

- You will have an office or telemedicine visit with a member of the surgical team to review your child's health, perform a physical exam and discuss recommendations for surgery.
- Call your surgeon's office if your child has sniffles, an ear infection, cold, cough, sore throat, fever or any other illness within two weeks of surgery. Children should not be sick before surgery and anesthesia.
- Talk to your child's surgical team about any medications your child takes. They will let you know which ones you should or should not give to your child before surgery.
- Make sure your child has a bath or shower the night before (or morning of) surgery. Clean their skin, hair, fingers, and nails. This will help prevent infection.
- You may be given an appointment to meet with a member of the anesthesia team before surgery.

## The day of surgery

- Dress your child in loose, comfortable clothing, and pack an extra set of clothes.
- If your child wears contacts, leave them at home. Have your child wear his/her glasses instead.
- Have your child remove any body piercings or jewelry.
- Bring a list of your child's medications (prescription and over-the-counter), including the dose.
- Bring your child's favorite stuffed animal and toy (handheld video games, etc.) to keep him/her busy.
- Please leave siblings at home, and be prepared to spend the majority of the day at the hospital for day surgery. If your child is being admitted to the hospital, prepare for a longer stay.

# Preparing your child for surgery

## Babies

- Learn about the surgery, so you're prepared and relaxed on the day of surgery. Children can sense anxiety.
- Bring your baby's favorite things (blanket, pacifier or musical toy), as well as his/her favorite bottle or sippy cup.



## Ages 1 - 3

- Begin to talk about surgery 1-3 days before in simple terms.
- Let your child pick a comfort item from home to bring (stuffed animal, blanket, toy, etc.).

## Ages 4 - 5

- Begin to talk about having surgery 3-5 days beforehand. Your child may start to ask questions about what to expect. It is important to be honest.
- Preschool-aged children sometimes believe their surgery is a punishment and they often need reassurance.
- Use simple, child-friendly explanations of how their body will be fixed.
- Playing doctor and reading books about having surgery or going to the hospital are great ways to help preschoolers understand.

## Ages 6 - 12

- Begin talking about surgery at least a week ahead of time.
- Talk openly and honestly to your child about the surgery using simple, easy-to-understand words (for example: “IV catheter” is a small straw to give your body a drink of water; “anesthesia” is a medicine to help you fall asleep so that you do not feel anything during your surgery). Prepare your child for things he/she might see or feel (stitches or bandages).

## Ages 13 and older

- Begin to talk about the surgery a few weeks before. Explain why he/she needs surgery and encourage him/her to ask questions. Most teens like to have some control of their situation. Let your child take part in the decision.
- Teens may be worried about how they will look after surgery. Talk to your child about what to expect after surgery.
- Your child may be worried about waking up during surgery or not waking up at all. Comfort your teen that he/she will be asleep for the entire surgery and will wake up when the surgery is over.
- Respect your teen’s need for privacy.



## Preparing your child for surgery, cont.

### Important safety information for teenage patients

- It is unsafe to mix alcohol, smoking and/or recreational drugs with anesthesia. It is imperative that your anesthesiologist be aware if your child uses these substances.
- Patients should not drink alcohol or drive for 24 hours after receiving anesthesia. In addition, they should not use heavy machinery or drive an automobile while taking prescription narcotic pain medication.

### Schedule a tour

Tours are available, and children can learn about the hospital experience, from admitting to discharge. If you would like to schedule a tour with your child please call your surgeon's office.





## Eating and drinking before surgery

To keep serious problems from happening during surgery, your child's stomach must be completely empty when surgery begins. You will receive a call the day before surgery confirming the planned surgical time. Use this time to guide the food and drink you offer to your child.

If these guidelines are not followed, your child's surgery will have to be canceled for his/her safety.

- Eight hours before surgery: Your child must stop eating all solid foods. This includes gum, candy, and mints. It is okay to continue to allow your child to receive formula, milk, breast milk and other clear liquids.
- Six hours before surgery: Children and toddlers must stop drinking milk and formula. It is okay to continue to allow your child to breast feed and drink clear liquids.
- Four hours before surgery: Patients must stop drinking breast milk. It is okay to continue to allow your child to drink clear liquids.
- Two hours before surgery: Your child must stop drinking all clear liquids within two hours of the scheduled surgery start time.

A clear liquid is any drink that you can see through (no pulp). This includes, but is not limited to, apple juice, water, white grape juice, popsicles, Gatorade, and Jello without fruit.

# The day of surgery

Type of Surgery\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Surgeon\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Surgery\_\_\_\_\_

Check In Time\_\_\_\_\_ Length of Surgery\_\_\_\_\_

## Checking in

Please arrive on time. The time you should arrive is not the scheduled surgery time. It is the time you should arrive at the main desk to check-in. We may ask you to arrive up to two hours before your child's surgery time to allow for pre-operative assessment and time to meet with your surgeon and anesthesiologist. We try to follow our surgical schedule as closely as possible; however, unexpected delays may occur. We thank you in advance for your patience.

When planning for day of surgery, remember that surgery itself takes up only part of the time you spend with us. You must include preparation and recovery in your plans, which together may take up most of the day. Your child may also be admitted to the hospital following surgery.

## Pre-operative assessment

When you are called to the Same Day Surgery room, you will be greeted by a nurse who will check your child's temperature, heart rate and blood pressure. The nurse will review questions about your child's health. Your child will be given a hospital gown and an ID bracelet to wear. A team member from anesthesia will ask many of the same questions. You will also see the surgeon, who will review the proposed surgical procedure and give you time to ask any last minute questions.

While you are in the pre-op area, you may be asked the same questions several times. Do not be alarmed. This is our way of ensuring patient safety.

A urine sample (pregnancy test) is required for all females who are of menstruating age. If your child needs to go to the bathroom before being called to the pre-op area, please notify the receptionist so that we can collect a sample of urine.

**Accompanying your child into the operating room**  
Sometimes, one parent or caregiver may be able to accompany their child into the operating room. If the anesthesiologist and surgeon feels this is safe, the parent will be able to stay until the child is “asleep” under anesthesia.

### Operating room

Your child's safety is very important to us. Before your child's surgery, the surgical team will perform a “time-out.” During this time, the team will review the following:

- Correct patient identification
- Correct side, site marking
- Correct procedure
- Correct position on the operating room table
- Correct implants, special equipment (when applicable)



### Anesthesia

The anesthesiologist is an important part of your child's care team. They manage your child's pain and ensure your child is “asleep” during surgery. He/she continuously watches your child's vital signs throughout surgery. The type of anesthesia your child will receive is based on his/her surgical procedure and his/her health.

## The day of surgery, cont.

### After surgery

Following your child's operation, your child will go to the recovery room. This is often referred to as the post-anesthesia care unit (PACU). The PACU is a unit where your child will recover from anesthesia before being discharged home or admitted to an inpatient pediatric unit. If your child is being admitted to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU), they will not go to PACU and will instead go directly to the PICU.

After your child has begun to awake from anesthesia you will be invited to be with your child as he/she begins to recover. For the health and safety of your child and the other patients in the PACU, Logan Health Medical Center allows a maximum of 2 adults at the bedside. We understand that being with your child is important, and we will make every effort to make that happen. Please understand that this is often dependent on the activity and number of patients in the unit.

After being brought back to the PACU you may notice several patients in different stages of anesthesia recovery. We ask you to respect the privacy of our patients by remaining only at your child's bedside.



## The post-anesthesia care unit (PACU)

When you come to the PACU there will be one to two nurses helping to monitor and wake your child from anesthesia. Your child may have several tubes and drains. These may include an IV to administer fluid and medicines, a mask or cannula to provide oxygen, and catheters to drain urine and other fluids from their body. He/she will be attached to monitors to track heart rate, oxygen level and blood pressure.

- Children react differently to anesthesia. Some awake quickly and some sleep for a longer period of time.
- It is normal for children to be confused, cry and experience restlessness or confusion when they wake from anesthesia. We understand that it can be difficult for parents to watch their child going through this. Fortunately, your child will not have any memory of this. While this behavior is typically not related to pain, your PACU nurse will help to identify what is normal behavior and what is more likely due to discomfort.
- Pain is common after surgery. It is important to us to adequately treat your child's pain. The nurses will watch closely for any signs of this and can treat with a variety of different IV and oral medicines.
- Nausea and vomiting is common after any procedure requiring anesthesia. There are a variety of medications that the nurses can give to treat this if your child has an upset belly.
- Many children are chilly when they arrive to the PACU. The nurses will provide warm blankets for their comfort.
- It is common for children to look pale, "puffy" or swollen after surgery. This is normal and will go away in time.

## Your role as a parent in the PACU

Parents are important members of the care team and needed during a child's recovery.

- If you arrive and your child is still asleep, please do not wake them.
- Children who wake on their own have a more comfortable waking experience.
- It can be difficult to see your child recovering from anesthesia. Please try to stay calm and speak in quiet, soft voices to allow the smoothest waking experience.
- Please feel free to bring a comfort item such as a toy, special blanket or stuffed animal to help your child as he/she wakes up.
- Your child will be thirsty and hungry when he/she wakes up. Please ask the nurse before breastfeeding or allowing your child to drink or eat. Logan Health Medical Center has a variety of drinks, bottles, sippy cups and food available once the medical team feels it is safe for your child to start drinking and eating again.

Recovery time varies from patient to patient, depending on the type of procedure, the patient's condition, and the anesthesia that was used. Before leaving the hospital, your child will need to be awake, breathing normally, and feel comfortable.



### Pediatric Unit/Pediatric Intensive Care Unit

Depending on your child's health and the surgery that he/she had you may be admitted overnight to Logan Health Children's. Logan Health Children's has many specialists including pediatric nurses, pediatric respiratory therapists, pediatric hospitalists and pediatric intensivists. All of our caregivers are specialized in taking care of sick kids.

- At Logan Health Children's your child will be cared for by pediatric nurses. The patient to nurse ratio is dependent upon how sick the patient is. It ranges from one nurse/one patient to one nurse/four patients.
- Logan Health Children's is a locked facility, and all visitors must have permission from the patients' family to visit. Visiting hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., please limit to four visitors at a time. Cold and flu season restrictions may apply, visit [logan.org](http://logan.org) for current visitor restrictions.



## In the hospital, cont.

- Each child can have two guardians (older than 18 years) stay at the bedside 24-hours a day. You will receive a special code for additional visitors.
- Siblings are allowed to visit at the discretion of the physicians and nurses in the pediatric unit. (Note: Visitation limits occur during cold and flu season. Please ask your nurse or visit [logan.org](http://logan.org) for the most up-to-date guidelines.)
- Each patient's room will have one couch bed, one bathroom shower and toilet.
- We also have a family room with refrigerator, microwave, sitting area, coffee and washer/dryer.
- Two meals vouchers are provided each day for parents/guardians.
- Moms who are breastfeeding should come with extra breastmilk. We also have breast pumps available for use.

### Going home

Your child's discharge instructions will be reviewed by a doctor or nurse before your child goes home. The instructions include:

- Eating and drinking after surgery
- How to treat your child's pain or discomfort
- Giving medicine
- Bandages and wound care
- Activity restrictions

It is important that your child ride in his/her car seat on the way home from the hospital, even if he/she has had belly surgery. We recommend that an adult sits beside young children in the car. It is important to check on your child often to make sure he/she is breathing comfortably. When sleeping, you should be able to awaken him/her easily. Older children can become nauseated in the car on the way home. We will give you a bucket just in case.

Most children will experience some discomfort or pain after surgery. The surgeon and pediatric doctors will prescribe pain medication to help ease your child's pain based on your child's age, how awake they are, and the type of surgery.

## Nonmedical ways to help manage pain

There are many measures you can help to manage your child's pain. Here are some tips to recognize and ease their pain.

## Helping babies manage pain

Babies cannot talk to us and communicate pain in other ways:

- High-pitched crying, grimacing, chin quivering
- Difficulty eating or taking a pacifier
- Irregular breathing
- Avoiding eye contact
- For newborns, lots of sneezing, yawning or hiccuping
- Unusual stillness or quietness

Here are some pain-relieving measures for infants:

- Swaddling, minimizing lights and noises, restricting visitors, making eye contact and speaking softly
- Hold them, stroke their hands and feet. Use skin-to-skin time if this is approved after surgery
- Gentle singing, soft music, feeding, and offering a pacifier

## Helping young children manage pain

Toddlers, preschoolers and young school-aged children are able to use words, but can't always tell you what is wrong. Things to watch for:

- Not eating, drinking or playing as much
- Crying, moaning and irritability
- Restlessness or being very still
- Difficulty sleeping
- Holding (and often not letting you touch) the area that hurts

## Pain after surgery, cont.

### Ways to help young children with pain

- Dimming lights, providing quiet time, bringing toys from home, and staying with your child
- Physical touch, hair stroking, hand holding, rocking or lying down in bed with him/her
- Reading books, playing music, or watching television and movies are all good distractions
- We also have a child-life team that can help you

### Helping older children manage pain

Older children and teenagers are able to tell you they're in pain, but they may not always do so.

- Being less active than usual, withdrawing from friends and family, becoming quieter
- Not eating, drinking or sleeping as much
- Irritability, restlessness or even becoming angry more often
- Complaining of pain

### Ways to help teenagers deal with pain

- Offer to be with teenagers, but give them the option to have privacy
- Offer touch, such as massage or hugs
- Watch television or movies with them
- Offer distractions (books, puzzles, music)
- Practice deep breathing

## Prescriptions

Depending on your child's surgery, he/she may be prescribed medicines to be given at home. We strongly encourage you to have your child's prescriptions filled before leaving the hospital. We are happy to call them into your local pharmacy or a pharmacy on the Logan Health campus, including:

### Logan Health Pharmacy – Clinical

200 Conway Drive | Kalispell, MT 59901 | Phone (406) 751-7600  
Hours: Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.,  
Saturday 8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

### Logan Health Pharmacy – Medical Arts

209 Conway Drive | Kalispell, MT 59901 | Phone (406) 752-2492  
Hours: Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.,  
Saturday 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

## Preferred Pharmacy

Name

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Phone Number

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## What to expect at home

### Activity

Your child may be sleepy and need to relax for the rest of the day. He/she may be unsteady when walking or crawling and will need you or another adult to protect him/her from injury. Make sure an adult is with your child at all times until he/she has returned to normal. Encourage quiet activities for the rest of the day (video games, reading or watching television).

### Eating and drinking

Do not force your child to eat or drink until he/she is ready. Encourage your child to drink clear liquids throughout the day. After your child can tolerate fluids, you may begin to offer solid foods. Start with light foods such as soup, crackers, and dry cereal. When it is easy for your child to eat these, it is okay to slowly transition back to a normal diet.

### Managing your child's discomfort or pain

It is normal for your child to have some discomfort, pain, or a low-grade fever (less than 101 degrees Fahrenheit). Here are some things we recommend:

- Follow your surgeon's advice for treating pain and low grade fevers.
- Parents can comfort their child better than anyone.
- Give your child cold liquids or popsicles for a sore throat.



## When to go back to school or daycare

Keep your child home from school or daycare after he/she is discharged home. If your child is discharged late in the day, he/she may need to stay home from school or daycare the following day. Keep your child home from school or daycare until instructed to return by your surgeon.

## When to call your child's surgeon after the surgery

Please call your surgeon if your child has:

- Nausea or vomiting
- An inability to urinate within 6-8 hours after being home
- Fever higher than 101 degrees Fahrenheit
- Signs of infection. These include, swelling, redness, a foul odor, drainage at the surgical site, increased pain or a prolonged fever
- Severe pain or the child is not consolable
- Excessive drainage/bleeding from the surgery site
- Cannot be awakened easily or remains very sleepy

## Follow-up visit

Approximately 2-3 weeks after surgery, you may be instructed to schedule a follow-up visit with your child's provider to make sure healing is happening properly. Please call Logan Health Children's Specialists office at (406) 758-7490 to schedule this appointment.



## General information

### Cell phones

Cell phones and wireless computers are permitted in public areas throughout the hospital. Free Wi-Fi is available.

### Tobacco-Free Campus

Logan Health is committed to providing a tobacco-free environment. Smoking or tobacco use of any kind is prohibited on all Logan Health property and grounds. We are proud to create a healthy, healing environment for patients, visitors, volunteers and employees.

### Hand washing

We want to keep you and your child safe during your stay with us. One way for us to do this is by reducing the spread of infection within our hospital. You and your child are an important part of our care team and can help us reduce the spread of infection by speaking up.

Please remember, it is okay to ask “Have you washed your hands?” In addition, it is important for you and all visitors to clean your hands with the available hand sanitizer when entering or leaving your child’s room.

### Visitors

Siblings are allowed to visit at the discretion of the physicians and nurses at Logan Health Children’s. (Note: seasonal visitation limits are sometimes in effect.) Updated visitation restrictions can be found at [logan.org](http://logan.org).

## Important Contact Information

Logan Health Children's	(406) 752-5111
Emergency Department	(406) 752-1733
Pediatric Inpatient floor	(406) 890-7282
Pediatric Social Work	(406) 890-7284
Patient Business Office (patient billing)	(406) 756-4408
Pediatric Surgery Office	(406) 758-7490
Pediatric Surgery Cell	(406) 407-4412
Pediatric Surgery Fax	(406) 758-7080



To learn more about the diagnoses that the pediatric surgical team treats, scan the QR code or visit [logan.org/children](http://logan.org/children).



**Children's Specialists**

202 Conway Drive | Kalispell, Montana  
(406) 758-7490 | [logan.org/children](http://logan.org/children)