

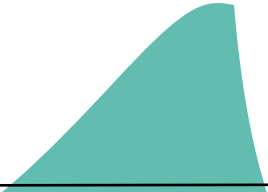


Preparing for Your Child's Heart Surgery



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Starting the Journey: Meeting the Surgeon and Team

The Pediatric and Congenital Heart Program, part of Hassenfeld Children's Hospital at NYU Langone, provides high-quality, compassionate medical care for known or suspected heart problems in babies developing in the womb, as well as infants, children, and adults.

We treat each patient with the utmost care, focusing on safety and comfort. Our specialized team provides the very best care for people of all ages with congenital heart disease, using minimally invasive procedures when possible.

Our cardiac surgeons treat patients of all ages who have inherited and acquired heart defects, performing about 250 cardiac surgeries per year for congenital heart defects. Our surgeons have extensive experience performing successful cardiac reconstructive procedures on patients with complex cardiovascular disorders including transposition of the great arteries, hypoplastic left heart syndrome, truncus arteriosus, and the entire spectrum of congenital heart defects. Our surgical results rank among the best in the nation, thanks to the outstanding work of our skilled, experienced team.

Under the leadership of Dr. Ralph Mosca, George E. Reed Professor of Cardiac Surgery, Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery, and Professor, Department of Pediatrics, our cardiac surgical team meets with parents and families to discuss surgical options, provide tours of the cardiac unit, and answer questions.

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"Here at NYU Langone, your family becomes our family. We are with you every step of the way."

George E. Reed Professor of Cardiac Surgery,
Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery

All children five and older need to see their dentists before surgery. The dentist will:

- make sure there are no cavities
- complete any dental work two weeks before surgery
- give your child a letter of clearance for surgery

Please bring this letter with you to pre-admission testing.

You may be concerned about your child missing school during and following surgery. It is important that your child's teachers know about his or her heart condition and what it will mean for school activities. We will prepare this information for your child's school.

Talking with Your Child and Family About Heart Surgery

As a parent, it is natural to feel anxious about your child's surgery and

Pre-Admission Testing Day

We will call you to schedule your child for pre-admission testing. This full-day appointment is scheduled within a week of surgery.

This can be a long day for you and your child. For your child's comfort and your convenience, here are some items that we suggest you bring:

- Snacks and drinks, including breast milk or formula for infants (enough for the day)
- Diapers for infants (enough for the day)
- Change of clothes for infants
- Small toys or games
- iPad or portable DVD player

It can help to have another adult along who can care for your child while you learn about the upcoming surgery.



Packing for the Hospital

It can be difficult to know what to pack for your child's surgery. The most important items are those that will make you and your child more comfortable. The hospital will provide basic items like diapers, formula, pacifiers, bottles, and hospital gowns. Bring essential items for yourself, but avoid bringing valuables. Please label all personal items.

Following surgery, parents are welcome to be with their child at anytime. One parent is encouraged and welcome to stay overnight in your child's room.





As a parent or family caregiver you know better than anyone how your child copes. You can help the healthcare team know how to support your child. There are many ways you can comfort your child. Research says that your presence, voice, touch, and calm manner decrease pain. Distraction can also help. You can distract your baby with singing, bubbles, and light-up toys or your older child with an iPad, tablet, breathing exercises, brainteasers, music, books, and imagery (“think of your favorite place”). Wi-Fi service is available at the CCVCU.

In addition to the doctors and nurses who are taking care of your child, we have many other professionals who also partner with you to support you and your child.

- Social Workers
- Child Life Specialists
- Speech and Occupat
- Care Managers
- Dieticians

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Leaving the Hospital

It is natural to be eager to take your child home. Most children spend three to ten days in the hospital after cardiac surgery depending on the type of surgery and how they are doing.

Our Social Workers and Care Managers will work closely with you, the nurses, and medical staff to ensure that your child is prepared for discharge home. They will assess your child's medical needs, your personal needs, and your insurance coverage. They can assist you in obtaining:

- Medications
- Transportation home or to follow-up appointments
- Access to formula and food for your child through programs such as Women, Infants, Children (WIC)
- Medical equipment
- Home care nursing
-

Notes

- Steri-strips (adhesive strips) should be removed five days after surgery
 - Gently clean the incision daily with soap and water
 - Dry the incision well by patting with a clean soft towel
 - Tub baths and showers may be taken five days after surgery
 - No ointments or other home remedies should be applied to the incision
- *Please call the Cardiac Surgery Office at 212.263.5989 if there is excessive redness, swelling, drainage, or tenderness at the surgical site.

In most cases your child can return to the same diet as before the surgery. In general, fried and greasy foods high in fat should be limited. Please refer to your child's hospital discharge instructions for your child's exact dietary guidelines.

- Infants and children should follow the current American Academy of Pediatrics immunization schedule before and after surgery.
- Exception: All live vaccines (MMR) should be delayed for six weeks after surgery. Speak with your child's pediatrician to find out which vaccines are considered live vaccines.

- Make sure all visitors and family members wash their hands prior to coming in contact with your child
- No contact with visitors or family members with flu-like or cold symptoms
- Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) can cause a serious infection in the lungs of young children who have a heart defect or have had heart surgery. To help prevent an RSV infection, all patients under the age of two who have a heart defect or who have had heart surgery should receive an RSV immunoprophylaxis injection (Synagis) prior to leaving the hospital. It should then be given every month by your pediatrician during the fall and winter months.
- Infants and children older than six months should receive the flu vaccine from their pediatrician.

Yes, antibiotics should be taken before dental procedures and before any scheduled or emergency procedures for up to six months after surgery.



Important Phone Numbers and Addresses

160 East 32nd Street, Level 3
New York, NY 10016
tel: 212.263.5940
fax: 212.263.5808

550 First Avenue – 15 East
New York, NY 10016
tel: 212.263.3200
fax: 646.501.6803

Sujata Chakravarti, MD
Medical Director

Jacquelyn Fuller, RN, BSN, CPN
Nurse Manager

Debra Lederman, RN, BSN, CLC
Assistant Nurse Manager

Deborah Dore, LCSW
Congenital Cardiovascular
Care Services
deborah.dore@nyumc.org
212.263.8070 x72726

317 East 34th Street, 8th Floor
212.263.5440

212.263.5585

212.263.5171

Chaplain's Office: 212.263.5903
Nights or weekends: 212.397.9330
and enter ID #26903

