

Getting Ready for Cranial Vault Surgery

Be at the hospital 2 hours before your surgery time.

Eating Before Surgery

- Your child can eat food or have a bottle up to 6 hours before surgery. This means if surgery is planned for 7:30 AM, the last meal should be finished by 1:30 AM.
- You can give your child clear liquids or breast milk up to 3 hours before surgery. Examples of clear liquids are apple juice, Pedialyte, and water.

What to Bring to the Hospital

- Wear comfortable clothes and leave any valuables at home.
- Photo ID is needed.
- Favorite blankets, stuffed animals, toys, music CD's will help comfort your child. CD players are available.
- If your baby uses special bottles or nipples bring them with you.
- You do not need to bring diapers or formula.

Where to Park

- The closest and easiest choice is valet parking - \$5 per day
- If you don't mind a short walk, you may self-park in the Visitor's Parking Deck -\$2 per day. (Don't forget to validate your parking ticket at the information desk at the Gateway Building or Ambulatory Care Center).

Preparing for Surgery

- Your child will change into a hospital gown.
- Any final paperwork will be completed.

- You will talk with your child's pediatric anesthesiologist. This is the doctor who gives your child the medicine used to put your child to sleep before the surgery and keeps your child safe and comfortable during the operation.
- Nothing painful will be done to your child while awake. Your child will be given medicine through a special mask to go to sleep. Once asleep, the tubes and IV lines needed to keep your child safe will be placed. This process can take over an hour.

During Your Child's Surgery

- You will get a pager – you do not have to sit in the waiting room. Eat breakfast or take a walk around the hospital.
- The nurse in the operating room will call you to let you know when the operation starts. You will have updates every hour.
- Dr. Rhodes will talk with you once your child is safely in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit.
- You will be with your child as soon as possible.

What to Expect After Cranial Vault Surgery

In The Hospital

- Your child may be fussy, upset, or crying when he awakes. This is normal.
- Your child will be given medicine to make sure he or she is comfortable and calm.
- On your child's finger or toe is a sticker with a red light. This is called a pulse oximeter. It makes sure your child is getting enough oxygen.
- Your child will receive IV fluids after the surgery. Even if your child does not drink much, he or she will be well hydrated.

- Your child will spend at least one night in the Pediatric Intensive Care, and at least 2 days in the hospital.
- All children experience swelling after the operation. They are the most swollen 48 hours after the operations.

After Surgery

- Your child may not eat or drink as much as usual for a few days.
- He is allowed to eat and drink the same way as before the surgery. Bottles, sippy cups, straws and spoons are OK.
- Dr. Rhodes does not recommend “no-no’s” or any type of arm restraints.
- All stitches dissolve on their own. This may take several weeks.
- You do not need to do anything special to the incision. You should wash your child’s hair every other day, with a baby shampoo
- Using a pacifier is OK.
- The swelling will go away slowly. It is usually all gone within 10 days.

Getting Back to Normal

- Make sure you have Children’s Tylenol, Children’s Ibuprofen at home.
- If there is nasal crusting, gently use a Q-tip and some plain saline to help clear the nostril.
- Dr. Rhodes recommends giving alternately both Children’s Tylenol and Children’s Ibuprofen for 5 days while they are awake.
- Some children have trouble sleeping through the night after surgery. For the first few days, give your child lots of love and understanding. After a week or so, many parents try to re-establish their child’s pre-surgery routine.

Do not hesitate to call us if you have any questions or concerns 804-828-3042

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