



BON SECOURS HOSPITAL
Bon Secours Health System

PARENT ADVICE BOOKLET

**HOW TO COPE AND PREPARE YOURSELF
IF YOUR CHILD IS GOING INTO HOSPITAL**



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INTRODUCTION

A visit or stay in hospital can be worrying, especially if you and your child have not been to hospital before. The sights, sounds, smells as well as people in different clothes can be unfamiliar and frightening for your child. You can help reduce worry for you child by preparing them for this experience. This leaflet has been prepared to ensure that your have the necessary information to help you prepare your child and we hope that your child's stay with us is as happy as possible.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR HOSPITAL

You can prepare your child, and reduce the fear that your child may experience, in the most gentle and natural way by introducing the experience of hospital into your child's normal play. For example, by using simple toys, books or playing games such as doctors and nurses at home, the concept of hospitals can be introduced. Children may not be able to imagine a hospital setting on their own, and you may have to help them imagine a hospital. For younger children you could start by getting them to roleplay being in bed and having breakfast in bed - this helps them understand that patients stay in over night. For younger children, who may be concerned that they are not returning home, always end the hospital play with the child coming home happily with their parents and family.

Reassurance and lots of love are important for a child going into hospital. We provide camp bed facilities for parents to stay overnight and it is our policy, if your child is under 16years, that you stay overnight. Reassure your child that you will be staying with them and will be there for them when they need you, especially before and immediately after the operation.

Before admission, it may be helpful to visit the hospital so your child knows what to expect. A child who is well informed about blood tests, anesthetics or x-rays, will be more confident and unafraid, than one who is not prepared. Answer questions truthfully, giving as much information as you think your child will understand. Remember, you can only do this if you have the information yourself.

If your child is for an operation they will need to fast as fasting is required before an anesthetic to avoid vomiting (fasting may also be required before some tests).

FASTING GUIDELINES

Fasting means nothing (not even water) to drink or eat. Check to see if your child is scheduled for a morning list (start time 8am) or an afternoon list (start time 1pm) as the anticipated start time will determine the fasting schedule. Generally your child can have a drink of water or clear fluids up to TWO Hours before the procedure and a light, non fatty meal or a glass of milk up to SIX HOURS before the procedure.

For example you may be told to fast from 12 midnight for food, with clear fluids permitted until 6am or later depending on the theatre schedule or to have an early breakfast at 7am and clear fluids until 1100am.

Please bring a bottle of still water on the day of admission as your child may drink sips of water whilst waiting for their surgery. The nurses will advise at what time your child should stop drinking water.

If your child is for an operation they will need to remove all of their clothes and wear a 'theatre gown' for going to theatre.

Children usually walk to the theatre department and you will be accompanying them.

Remember that all of the Doctors and Nurses in the theatre will be wearing special theatre attire including hats, masks and goggles and knowing this in advance will help your child.

Ask the consultant exactly what treatment will be given so that you have sufficient information to answer questions and explain in simple but honest terms.

WHEN TO PREPARE

Children under three years old

A few days before admission is ample preparation time. Explain to your child that he or she will be going into hospital. The younger the child, the more you will have to repeat this to reassure them and using dolls or teddies may help them understand what to expect.

Children from 4-6 years

Three to seven days before admission is usually ample time for preparation. This will give your child time to think about it and ask questions.

Children 7 years and older

For children seven and over, frank discussion a few weeks beforehand & participation in the planning is advisable.

HOW TO PREPARE YOURSELF

Try to re-organise your normal routine so that you can spend as much time as possible with your child. If necessary organise friends and relatives to look after your other children.

- Remember to check if your child needs to fast. It is important that you check this with your child's consultant.
- Should your child develops a cold, diarrhoea or other illness or is in contact with an infectious disease or infestations (eg. headlice) prior to admission please contact the Consultant's office for advice.
- Bring any medicines that your child takes regularly (eg. for asthma) to ensure their identification and availability if required.
- Be as honest as possible with your child for example it isn't advisable to say 'there will be no needles', unless you have been told this will be so or 'you're only going to have an x-ray', when an operation is planned. Lies hurt and will teach your child not to trust hospital staff.
- If your child has any **additional needs** please let the consultant secretary or hospital know in advance so we can facilitate these.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED IN HOSPITAL

FOR YOUR CHILD

Night clothes, washing kit, light day clothes for recovery time, (nappies/wipes,) a favourite blanket or toy (no matter how scruffy), a soother and/or bottle (if used), simple books and games to pass the time.

FOR YOURSELF

Night clothes, toilet bag, light clothes, something to pass the time. Storage space is limited so don't bring too much and don't bring valuables.

WHAT YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO DO IN HOSPITAL

You will be free to care for your child as you would at home, washing, dressing bringing them to or helping them in the toilet, nappy changing, playing with and feeding. Hospital staff will naturally offer any assistance you may require, support your child during medical examinations and injections, explaining what is going to happen and give comfort.

You will be an advocate for your child in hospital. Children are unlikely to have the words to explain feelings or fears. Let your child know that you will voice their worries or fears to hospital staff for them. It is hospital policy to stay with your child (under16) at all times apart from when they are having the surgery. You will be facilitated to go to theatre with them and be brought to the recovery room once the surgery is over. It's important that you look after yourself as well and its advisable while you child is in theatre that you get some refreshments that you have the energy needed to care for you child after surgery.

Please indicate to staff the name of other carers who will be sharing the care with you. This will allow staff to maintain your child's security in your absence.

If you or your family have concerns about your child's condition and feel that something is not right, press the nurse call bell and seek immediate assistance. Nursing staff are trained in the Early Warning system and will ensure that your child is appropriately assessed and will seek further assistance if required.

GOING HOME

Before discharge, make sure you know all about your child's after-care. Write down any instructions and ask staff to explain any prescriptions given etc. If you are not clear about anything - ask again. When the doctor tells you to bring your child back to be reviewed, ensure that you take note of the date. It is a good idea to let your GP know when your child is for admission and when discharged.

REMEMBER

- Do ask for written instructions if they are not given to you.
- DO read all the instructions and follow them all.
- DO ask about anything you don't understand or feel that you need to know.

AT HOME AGAIN

Do not expect your child to be back to normal immediately and when your child gets home from hospital you may experience difficulties at first as some children may feel out of sorts for a while. If you feel your child is not progressing as anticipated after discharge, contact your GP.

VISITING HOURS

Visiting hours are flexible and generally you may have visitors any time from 11am until 9pm. For child and parent comfort however we discourage visits during mealtimes.

- Children may visit if accompanied by an adult.
- If visitors have a cold or other infection, it may be advisable not to visit to protect your child and other patients from becoming infected.
- On occasion due to widespread infection within the community, it may be necessary to impose visiting restrictions. If this situation arises we request that these guidelines be followed.

MEAL TIMES

Breakfast:	8am - 9:30am
Lunch:	12md - 1:30pm
Supper:	5pm - 6pm

Beverages are provided mid morning, mid afternoon and in the evening for your child. Parents can avail of restaurant services from 8am until 6.30pm. If you have special dietary requirements please advise us in advance, so that your dietary needs may be met. Breakfast and meal vouchers are provided for parents.

IN PATIENT FACILITIES

- Television: Each room has a television with a variety of channels.
- Nurse Call System: A nurse call system is installed in each room and can be activated from the bedside or in bathroom areas
- Wifi is available in all patient areas. Log in BSGGuest Password – bons1234
- Telephone: A telephone is provided at the bedside for convenience and all calls are charged to your account.
- Pastoral Care: A Pastoral Care service is available for all principle denominations. The sacrament of Holy Communion is offered to patients on a daily basis.

- We request your co-operation in vacating your room between 9am and 11am

We wish to provide the best service possible and you will be asked on admission if you would like to take part in a survey after discharge. Your feedback is used to improve the services provided and we would appreciate your assisting us by partaking in this survey.

REMEMBER TO

- Check your insurance policy cover for the treatment and the accommodation required.
- Confirm with your insurance company prior to admission if there is any excess on your policy as this excess is payable on admission.
- Bring the Insurance Membership Card or number on admission.
- You will be asked to complete an insurance form and will need your GP's name and address and the date you first visited your consultant.

SELF PAY PATIENTS (NON INSURED)

Non-insured patients like to know their costs in advance. In a large number of cases, the hospital will be in a position to quote a fixed price for your treatment. This will be based on the information forwarded by the consultant on treatment required, anticipated length of stay, ancillary services, etc.

You will be asked for payment on or before admission. You may be entitled to tax relief as a self pay patient. Our staff will be pleased to provide further details. Payment can be made either by cheque, cash, laser or credit card

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