

## Additional Notes

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# Your child's admission to hospital



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## Children's Eye Unit

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This leaflet is for parents and guardians of children having eye surgery and will tell you what you need to do to prepare for your child's admission to hospital and what to expect after you go home.

## What do I need to plan before my child comes in?

Be positive and reassuring about coming into hospital with your child. Young children are often very excited at the prospect of a hospital stay, but older children can be anxious. Remind your child about their admission 1-2 days beforehand. Deal honestly with any questions they ask. You can find useful information about your child's anaesthetic from the Royal College of Anaesthetists, Google search for rcoa-ac.uk

Please arrange for your other children to be looked after for the whole admission day.

Make sure you have a good supply of paracetamol syrup or tablets and paediatric ibuprofen at home. Both of these medicines are generally effective in relieving pain after eye surgery.

Bath and wash your child's hair the night before the operation.

Remove any nail varnish, jewellery or cosmetics. Girls are advised to avoid wearing eye make-up for one week prior to surgery.

Girls who have started their periods will have a routine pregnancy test from a sample of urine on arrival to the ward.

## Who can I contact?

If you need to ask questions please call the paediatric nurses on **0300 019 6234**.

Emergency helpline: Acute referral clinic **0300 019 4181**

Monday-Friday, 8am -6pm.

Saturday and bank holidays 8.30am -6pm.

Sunday 8.30am - 2pm

Eye ward: **0300 019 4358**, seven days a week between 6pm and 8am.

For any non-eye related queries/advice call Poole Hospital Paediatric Unit on **01202 665511** and ask for the paediatric board holder on bleep **0218**.

## Feedback

If you wish to make a comment about the care you have received, please complete the family and friends comments card or write to the ward directly.

We value you and your child's comments, as we always strive to improve the service we provide.

Please ask us for any other advice you may need - we are happy to help.

## What if my child is ill?

If your child becomes unwell, develops a temperature, cough, sore throat or runny nose then please ring us for advice. The surgery may need to be postponed.

Paediatric nurse on eye ward: **0300 019 4358**.

If not available, please call the admissions office on **0300 019 4366**.

## On the morning of surgery:

Your child should wear loose, comfortable clothing and cotton underwear. Tie long hair back with a non-metallic band.

Please arrive at 7.30 am.

Car parking is charged at a concessionary rate on the day of surgery.

## What about going home?

Your child should be cared for at home by a parent or someone well known to them for at least 48 hours following surgery.

We recommend having two adults in the car going home. We advise against taking your child home using public transport.

Have a few quiet days at home after surgery to allow your child to settle back into their routine. Allow gentle play and watching TV but do not allow sports, ball games or swimming while the eye(s) still look red. This can be 2-6 weeks.

## Caring for the eye

Most children are light sensitive for a while after surgery. Their eyes may also feel tender or uncomfortable. Try to avoid them rubbing their eyes by:

- keeping the lights at home subdued to help them relax
- encouraging them to wear a hat with a brim i.e. a baseball cap
- avoiding very bright, windy or smoky places
- avoiding sand or other foreign objects from getting into the eye

We will show you how to bathe the eye before your child is discharged. Continue to bathe the eye with boiled, cooled water and clean gauze which you throw away after use, as advised by the nurse.

If your child has glasses they should continue to wear these.

Use the eye drops or ointment as prescribed. This will be easier to do if your child is lying down. We will show you how to use the medication before your child is discharged.

Always wash your hands before and after touching the eyes.

Avoid bath water getting into the eye by giving your child a bath rather than a shower. Bathing alone will also help avoid any splashes getting into their eyes. Try not to wash your child's hair for 3-4 days after surgery to avoid soap entering the eye(s).

No make-up should be worn for at least one week after surgery or until redness disappears.

## What can I do if my child is in pain?

Make sure that you have paracetamol (calpol) and ibuprofen (calprofen) at home. The paediatric nurse will tell you what time you can give the next dose on the day you go home.

### After squint surgery

We recommend that paracetamol syrup or tablets are given regularly according to the instructions on the bottle or packet for three to four days after squint surgery, even if your child appears comfortable.

If your child says they are in pain, appears unsettled, fretful or tearful despite regular paracetamol, then please also give paediatric ibuprofen syrup according to the instructions on the medicine. This medicine should be given with food.

### Removal of cysts and other surgery

We recommend one to three days of paracetamol as required.

## How long should I keep my child off school or nursery?

- Squints - one week
- Other surgery - one day to one week. Your nurse will advise you.

## Consent to surgery:

Consent is given by the parent or the person who holds legal parental responsibility by signing the appropriate consent form. This may be done in clinic or on the day of surgery. Please ensure this person is available on the operation day to sign it.

**Note:** According to law, if parents are not married the mother may sign, or the father, if the child was born after December 2003 and his name is included on the birth certificate.

## What do I need to bring with me?

- Dressing gown, slippers/non slip socks
- Sun hat and/or sunglasses.
- A special toy or comforter
- Nappies and wipes
- Any medication checked and labelled
- Red book for under 5's

Parents/ carers can bring a mobile phone. Please keep the phone on silent and respect the privacy of other families when making calls. No photos or recording are allowed.

## Should I bring food and drinks?

We have a children's finger food menu to offer your child after their operation, however if you prefer to bring in your own snacks you are very welcome.

For parents/carers, there are a variety of café's around the hospital, please ask for details.