

Parent's Guide to the Anesthetic Care Unit (ACU)

While you are waiting

Once your child is asleep, a staff member will show you to the waiting area. This is a good time to look after yourself. You can go for a short walk to get a coffee or a bite to eat. This can help you feel calm and ready to support your child when they wake up.

What happens during recovery?

After an anesthetic or heavy sedation, your child will be transferred to a recovery room in the ACU. The nurses who work here have extra training for this specialized area. Your child will have one to one nursing care when they arrive. After your child wakes up, the nurse may divide attention between your child and one other.

What happens after your child's procedure?

After the procedure is finished, your child's doctor will come to the waiting room to explain how everything went. This is a good time to write down any instructions the doctor gives you on how to care for your child at home. You will also have a chance to ask questions. There is usually a small time delay between the doctor's visit and when a staff member invites you to the recovery room to be with your child. Every effort is made to have you at the bedside before your child wakes up, however, they may be awake when you arrive.

Your time in recovery

When you first see your child, they will most likely still be asleep. You will see and hear the monitor that tells the nurse how your child is doing. **Parents often feel emotional when they see their child in recovery. Please tell your nurse right away if you start to feel uneasy or faint.** When your child starts to wake, they may be drowsy, confused, restless or upset. **Please keep the bed rails up and stay at your child's side for safety.**

Your child will stay in recovery until they are awake and comfortable. You know your child best: if you think your child is thirsty or uncomfortable, tell your child's nurse. Most children go home an hour or so after daycare surgery. Certain procedures require a longer stay.

If your child is staying overnight in the hospital, a nurse will coordinate their transfer to the ward.

If your child is having a day procedure, a nurse will explain how you can take care of your child at home. This includes what and when to feed your child, how to keep them comfortable, and what to expect in the **next 24-48 hours**. Feel free to ask questions. A nurse will call you the day after the procedure to ask how your child is doing