

# Your Trip to the SurgiCenter

A Child's Guide to  
Outpatient Surgery



The Reading Hospital  
**SurgiCenter**  
Spring Ridge





**My name is Michael.** I heard you are going to have an operation at the SurgiCenter at Spring Ridge. I had one there, too, and thought you might want to hear about what happened to me.

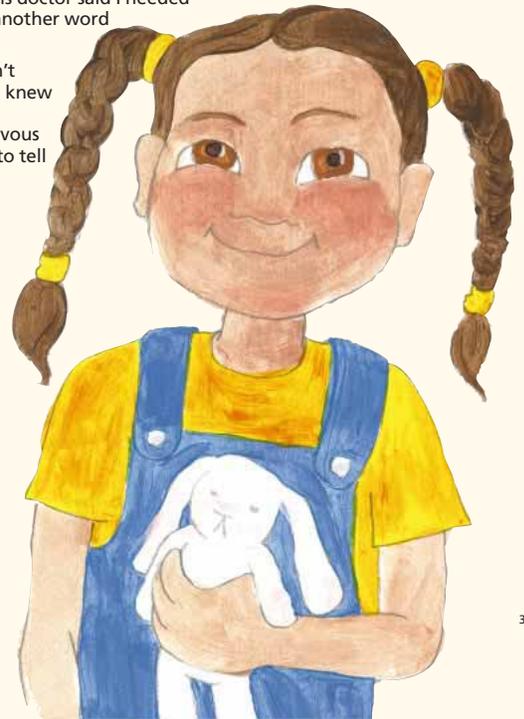
I was playing baseball a couple of months ago when I broke my arm. It really hurt a lot. The doctor said I needed to go to the SurgiCenter to fix my arm so that I could play sports again.

My Mom explained that the doctor would fix the bones in my arm. It sounds like it would hurt a lot, except they give you medicine so you don't feel it. She said it was normal to be a little scared, but that everything would be OK.

Believe me, there's nothing to worry about. Your Mom, Dad, or your special grown-up will be with you most of the time.

**I'm Teresa.** The SurgiCenter helped me feel better, too. I used to get colds and ear infections all of the time, and missed a lot of school. My doctor said if I got sick one more time, I'd have to have my tonsils out. I got sick again, and we went to see a special doctor called a surgeon. This doctor said I needed surgery. That's just another word for an operation.

Michael and I weren't nervous because we knew what to expect. So you won't be nervous either, we're going to tell you how it works.



## The Tour

A week before my operation, my Nana and I took a tour of the SurgiCenter. That's where I met Michael. We got to see the operating rooms, which are sometimes called "ORs." They had big, fancy machines like you would see in an action movie.

The ORs also had three or four screens like TVs. The doctor uses them to watch everything going on during your operation.

The doctors and nurses were dressed funny. They wore "scrubs" that look like green pajamas. They showed us the masks they wear when they operate that keep us safe from germs. At first, the masks look a little strange. But when they take them off, you can see that the doctors and nurses are smiling.



We also got to see the "pre-op" area. That's where you go before your operation. Then, we saw the "post-op" area, or "PACU." That's where you go after your operation. Both places have DVDs and video games in the kids' rooms.

Instead of beds, they had recliners. I got to lean all the way back just like my Grandpa does at his house. In the PACU, they had a huge fridge full of goodies! Some of the rooms had big cribs for the little kids.

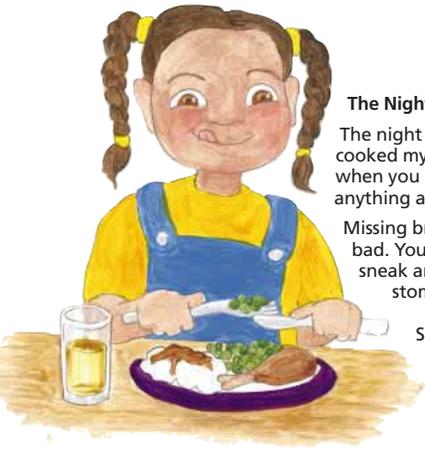
Next, we met the doctor who gives kids medicine to make them relax and get sleepy. That kind of doctor is called an anesthesiologist.

The doctor told us that when you get your medicine before your operation, you may have to put on a mask, too.

We got to try one on. You put the mask over your nose and mouth. It makes you look like a jet pilot!



## Before Your Operation



### The Night Before

The night before my operation, my Nana cooked my favorite foods. I pigged out because when you have an operation you can't eat anything after midnight.

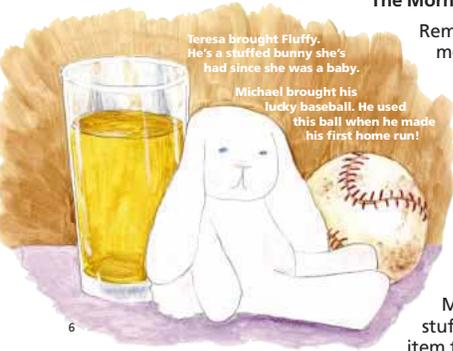
Missing breakfast the next morning wasn't so bad. You might feel a little hungry, but don't sneak any food. It's really important that your stomach is empty when they operate.

Besides, you can have treats at the SurgiCenter after your operation.

### The Morning of Your Operation

Teresa brought Fluffy. He's a stuffed bunny she's had since she was a baby.

Michael brought his lucky baseball. He used this ball when he made his first home run!



Remember – don't eat anything in the morning. You can have some kinds of drinks up to two hours before your operation – drinks like water, apple juice, or tea without any milk. Don't drink anything without checking first.

You'll want to take a bath or a shower before coming to the SurgiCenter. Don't put on any lotion, perfume, or cologne. Don't wear any jewelry.

Make sure to bring your favorite stuffed animal, a blanket, or any small item that is special to you.

## At the SurgiCenter

Nana and I went to the third floor. That's where the SurgiCenter is. We signed in at the receptionist area, and then sat in a waiting room. The waiting room had a gigantic window, and I could see really far.

They have a table for kids. It has toys, crayons, and coloring books. I made a picture while we waited.



## After the Operation

They called my name, and took us to the pre-op place. The kids' rooms are right in front of the nurses' desk. The nurses like kids and give them extra attention. I changed into a gown and then sat on a recliner. We were visited by a very nice nurse. She asked me and Nana if we had any questions. She listened to my heart, and let me listen, too. It sounded sort of like a drum.

The doctor who gives you medicine came in, too, and made me laugh.

I didn't want to leave my Nana, but the nice nurse promised to stay with me and look after me. In the operating room, she held my hand and asked me about my stuffed bunny until the "sleepy medicine" made me fall asleep. During my operation, my Nana waited in the lounge right outside the OR. I had Fluffy with me the whole time.



I trusted my Mom so I really wasn't scared. Everything happened just like she said it would. Remember, I told you about the mask with the medicine? I didn't feel anything until I woke up in post-op after the operation.

Post-op looks like pre-op, only bigger, and the kids' rooms have glass walls. My Mom and Dad were there waiting for me to wake up. At first, my arm hurt a little.

The nurse gave me some pills to make me feel better. Then, I played one of the video games with Dad. It was really fun.

When my arm stopped hurting, I changed into my clothes. The nurse said I had been a great patient. Then, I got to go home.



After I got better, I went back to school, and I haven't missed a day since. Now, that I don't have colds, Nana says that I sing like an angel, so I joined the school chorus!

After I got home, my best friend came over to watch TV. In a few weeks, my arm healed, and now I can do sports again. Really, it wasn't so bad. You'll be doing what you like to do soon, just like us!



## New Words You Might Hear

Ask your Mom, Dad, or special grown-up to read the story on the other side.

**Operation:**

The time when doctors and nurses work on your body to fix what is wrong. This will make you feel better.

**Surgery:**

This is another name for operation.

**Surgeon:**

A special doctor who does operations.

**SurgiCenter:**

This is the place where you will go to get your operation.

**Anesthesia:**

This is the name for the medicine that you breathe. It is a gas like air. Anesthesia makes you sleepy during your operation, and allows you to wake up after it is over.



**Anesthesiologist:**

A special doctor who gives you medicine that makes you sleep during your operation. The anesthesiologist makes sure you are safe and that nothing hurts you.

**Nurse:**

A person who has gone to a special school to learn how to keep patients safe and comfortable. Nurses at the SurgiCenter are friendly and helpful. They will get you ready for your operation, help the doctor during the operation, and make sure you are ready to go home.

**Pre-Op:**

The room you go to before your operation.

**Post-Op:**

The room you go to after your operation.

**PACU, or Post-Anesthesia Care Unit:**

Another name for post-op, where you go after surgery.