

# Your Child's Trip to the SurgiCenter

A Parent's Guide to Outpatient Surgery

name

day



The Reading Hospital  
**SurgiCenter**  
Spring Ridge



### Tour for You and Your Child

To arrange for a tour of The Reading Hospital SurgiCenter at Spring Ridge, please call 610-568-3050.

This tour, designed to provide information and lessen anxiety, is recommended about a week before surgery.

## You know that surgery is necessary for your child's health and well being. However, the experience is often difficult for parents, and most of them would gladly trade places with their children scheduled for surgery.

Please be comforted by the fact that the staff of The Reading Hospital SurgiCenter at Spring Ridge is experienced in caring for children. We understand the significant differences between pediatric and adult patients. And in addition to surgeons and nurses experienced in pediatric surgery, an anesthesiologist trained in pediatrics will manage your child's medications. Also, our SurgiCenter is certified by the state of Pennsylvania to perform pediatric surgery.

It's important that you cope with your own fears and apprehension so you do not transfer your feelings to your child. Children are very intuitive and quickly pick up on their parents' emotions. Your child may have seen a TV show or news items about surgery, and now has some ideas – true or not – about what to expect.

It's imperative to address these notions, especially your child's fears.

### Children of all ages may fear:

- Having a body part destroyed, damaged, or changed.
- Being away from home and family, or being left alone. Older children may fear being away from school and friends.
- Pain, or the possibility of pain.
- Needles or shots.
- The unknown.

### Younger children may fear:

- The dark.
- The surgical staff dressed in scrubs and masks.
- The mask used for anesthesia.
- Having to be in a strange bed or room.
- Medical equipment that looks or sounds strange.
- Being around strangers.
- Feeling helpless.

### Older children may fear:

- Loss of control.
- Surgery and its risks.
- Dying.

### How Can I Ease My Child's Fears?

One of the best ways to ease fears is to inform your child about the procedure in easily



understood terms. The other side of this brochure was written in a way to tell your child about the SurgiCenter and address some common fears. We suggest that you read it to or with your child.

In addition to reviewing the brochure, discuss your child's specific procedure. Tell your child what will be happening, why, and the long-term benefits of surgery. For example, "The doctor will fix your knee so you can play baseball."

Let your child's age and developmental level determine how much detail you give. Young children need only basic information, whereas older children and teens might want to know all about the procedure.

Encourage your child to ask questions and express feelings. Educate yourself so you are prepared to answer questions honestly. For example, if your child asks about pain, say it might hurt but the nurses have medicine to lessen or stop the pain.

Don't assume that a lack of questions means your child understands. Younger children may not know the right words to express their questions. Older children are less likely to admit that they do not understand explanations.

### Other things you can do to help your child.

- Encourage your child to tell a sibling, grandparent, or friend about the operation. That way, you'll be able to hear what your child understands.
- Reinforce that the operation will make your child feel better.
- Make sure your child understands that surgery is not a punishment for something he or she did wrong.
- Have your child pick out a favorite toy or stuffed animal to bring to surgery.
- Be patient with your child. It's normal for children of all ages to behave differently during stressful times. Young children may become fussy or clingy, regress, or have tantrums. Older children may become irritable or uncooperative.
- Read books about hospitalization with your child.

## Helpful Books

Several children's books have been written about hospitals. They are available through libraries, book stores, and on-line booksellers. Here are some suggested titles with authors and reading levels.

*A Big Operation: The Busy World of Richard Scarry.* Richard Scarry. Ages 4-8.

*Going to the Hospital.* Fred Rogers. Baby/Preschool.

*Franklin Goes to the Hospital.* Sharon Jennings. Ages 4-8.

*Clifford Visits the Hospital.* Norman Birdwell. Ages 4-8.

*Curious George Goes to the Hospital.* H.A. Rey and Margaret Rey. Ages 4-8.

*A Visit to the Sesame Street Hospital.* Deborah Hantzig. Ages 4-8.

*Miffy in the Hospital.* Dick Bruna, Patricia Crampton. Baby/Preschool.

*Going to the Hospital.* Anne Civardi and Stephen Cartwright. Baby/Preschool.

*Chris Gets Ear Tubes.* Betty Pace and Kathryn Hutton. Ages 4-8

*Tubes in My Ears: My Trip to the Hospital.* Virginia Dooley, Miriam Katin. Ages 4-8.

*Good-bye Tonsils.* Julian Lee Hatkoff, et al. Grades 2-4.

*Twins Go to the Hospital: Sweet Valley Kids Series #20.* Francine Paschal. Ages 4-8.

*Let's Talk About Going to the Hospital.* Marianne Johnston and Erin McKenna. Ages 4-8.

### For Siblings

*When Molly Was in the Hospital.* Debbie Duncan, Nina Ollikainen. Preschool – Grade Two.

## Preparing Your Child for Surgery

### Pre-op Telephone Call

A nurse from The Reading Hospital SurgiCenter at Spring Ridge will call you the week before your child's scheduled operation to ask you questions and to provide you with the additional information you need to know.

#### During this pre-op call, the nurse will:

- Review your child's medical history.
- Ask you about your child's medications; *please have a list of medications available, including non-prescription medications and herbal remedies.*
- Ask if your child has any allergies.
- Provide you with special pre-operative instructions your child must follow before the surgery.
- And review information on when you and your child should report to The Reading Hospital SurgiCenter at Spring Ridge. **Please note: you will be notified what time to arrive two to three days before your surgery date. This time is usually one hour before the start of your child's operation.**

**Your child's pre-operative instructions are very important to assuring a positive surgical experience.** Please let us know if you do not understand any of the instructions that the nurse gives you to follow.

## Important

**Your child's surgery could be cancelled if we are unable to reach you. So, if you have not spoken to our nurse within 48 hours of the scheduled surgery, please call the SurgiCenter at 610-568-3024 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.**

## Well in Advance

Your doctor may have told you to have certain laboratory or other testing done in preparation for your child's surgery. Please be sure that you make arrangements for these tests according to your surgeon's instructions.

- Review and follow all the pre-operative instructions you received from your child's surgeon and from the SurgiCenter nurse. **Not following them could cause serious complications.**
- Notify your doctor if your child becomes ill with a cold, rash, sore throat, cough, fever, upset stomach, upper respiratory infection, or an asthma attack within two weeks of the scheduled operation. Your child's physician may wish to reschedule the surgery.
- Take the time to put together a list of all the medications your child currently takes, if any. Be sure to include non-prescription medications and herbal remedies. You will need this information when the nurse calls you.
- Gather the items your child will need to bring to the SurgiCenter:
  - Your child's health benefit identification cards.
  - A case for glasses, contacts, or hearing aides.
  - Power of Attorney document if applicable.
- If you have other young children, be sure to make arrangements for someone to take care of them during your child's surgery.
- Expect to be in and out within three hours. *Your child's specific procedure, however, may require more time so please check with your doctor.*

**Prepare to stay at the SurgiCenter with your child. You may stay with your child before and after surgery. YOU MUST STAY IN THE SURGICENTER DURING SURGERY.**



## The Night Before Surgery

- Because your child cannot have anything to eat after midnight, be sure to serve a good meal at supper. Healthy snacks afterward may also be a good idea.

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- Do not allow your child to eat anything after midnight.
- Do not give your child any medication after midnight unless instructed by the nurse. *(If your child is diabetic, the nurse will provide you with specific instructions.)*

## The Morning of Surgery

- Up to two hours before your scheduled arrival time, your child may drink **clear** liquids, including water, apple juice, ginger ale, or tea without milk.
- Give your child only those medications that the nurse told you to give. If your child is asthmatic or insulin dependent, please bring his or her medications to the SurgiCenter.
- Bathe your child or have your child shower. Do not use lotions, perfume, or oils.
- Have your child dress in pajamas, or loose, comfortable clothes, such as fleece pants, sweatshirts, or shirts that are easy to button. Your child may want to lounge in them at home after surgery. Your child should also wear low-heeled shoes – sneakers are perfect.
- Have your child leave expensive toys and ALL jewelry at home.
- Be sure you have the following items ready to bring with you: your child's health benefit identification card, Power of Attorney document (if applicable), and case for eyeglasses, contact lenses, or hearing aides.
- Remember your child's favorite toy or stuffed animal.

## Arriving at the SurgiCenter

The SurgiCenter at Spring Ridge is located on Keiser Boulevard in Wyomissing. **For a map and driving directions, turn to page 9.**

When you arrive at the SurgiCenter, park anywhere in front of the building.

Take the elevator to the **third floor**. Sign in at the reception desk and have a seat in the reception area. Your child may want to play at the children's table near the window. You will be called to the Registration area within a few minutes to verify personal information. You should then be seated again.

A nurse will soon call your child's name, and lead you to the pre-operative area. Please stay with your child. For the comfort of all of our patients, however, please have no more than two people accompany your child.



## Getting Ready

At this time, help your child change into a patient gown, robe, and slippers, and store belongings in the bag provided. A nurse will take your child's temperature, blood pressure, and pulse.

The anesthesiologist will visit your child prior to surgery. During this visit, the anesthesiologist will assess not only your child's health, but also his or her maturity. The doctor will discuss with you, and, when appropriate, with your child, the anesthesia options available.

## Anesthesia Options

All of the anesthesiologists who work with children at Spring Ridge have been trained in pediatric anesthesia. Recognizing the unique anesthesia needs of children, we're prepared to help them be comfortable during their operation, which should help you to relax. We will select the type of anesthesia based on your child's age, maturity, and preferences.

Frequently, children are concerned about whether they will get a "shot" before their surgery. This is usually not necessary. **Most children do not require pre-anesthetic medications, especially for short operations. Children who do require them can often receive pre-anesthetic medications by mouth. If your child cannot or prefers not to take oral medication, injections can be ordered.**

### The pre-anesthesia options for your child are:

■ **No pre-anesthetic medication:** Choosing this option avoids a "shot," but it means that your child will be fully awake going into the operating room. On the plus side, most likely your child would wake up rapidly after the anesthetic. For most children, this is a good option.

■ **Oral pre-anesthetic medication:** this also avoids an injection. It usually provides excellent sedation, and relieves anxiety about separation from parents. However, this type of anesthesia might make your child more sleepy or irritable in the post-anesthesia care unit, and might slightly increase your child's post-op time before discharge home.

Because music has been shown to speed healing, your child may awake to music following surgery. The nurse will ask your child about his or her favorite tunes, and will help set up the video game system if desired.

Just before entering the operating room, your child will be asked to remove any eyeglasses or contact lenses.

## DURING SURGERY

**You must stay in the SurgiCenter during your child's surgery.** If you leave the SurgiCenter waiting area, please tell the receptionist where you are going.

Your surgeon has already explained the operation your child will be having.

**Your child may be admitted to the hospital of your choice if:**

- More extensive surgery is needed.
- Complications arise due to the anesthesia.
- Your child experiences more pain than expected.

### Anesthesia During Surgery

You will be asked to wait in the lounge. Not having parents present for the actual anesthesia allows our staff to concentrate fully on your child.

Once in the operating room, we will apply monitoring devices and then begin anesthesia. If your child is young, we will ask her or him to breathe some "magic air" through a clear mask. If older, your child might prefer to receive intravenous medication rather than breathe through the mask.

Either way, in a couple of minutes, your child will fall asleep. Then, we will start an IV, which will be present when your child awakens.

Depending on the operation, we may need to insert a breathing device while your child is asleep. This may cause a scratchy throat or cough after anesthesia.

Once the operation is complete, the anesthetic medications will be stopped, and your child will begin to wake up. One parent will be called at this time.

## AFTER SURGERY

Following surgery, your child will recover in the post-operation area. A nurse will ask your child to measure any pain experienced by using a series of smiling and frowning faces. Based on the response, the nurse will provide your child with relief. We will continue to evaluate until your child is safely awake and any pain or nausea has been controlled.

At that time, we will give your child liquids to drink and a snack to eat.

Your surgeon will provide detailed, written instructions for your child's care at home. Before you leave the SurgiCenter, a nurse will review the instructions with you. When feeling comfortable, your child can dress and return home.

Upon returning home, it is important to keep your child quiet, even if feeling well. It is not good for your child to be running around the day of surgery.



### Following surgery, your child may:

- Feel sleepy.
- Feel slightly nauseous or queasy. Please give your child ginger ale or crackers to relieve queasiness.
- Have slight oozing from the incision.
- Have minor pain that can be relieved with ice or the prescribed pain medication.

### Contact YOUR SURGEON immediately if any of the following occurs:

- Nausea not relieved by giving your child ginger ale or crackers.
- Bleeding.
- Pain not relieved by prescribed medication.
- Prolonged dizziness.

A SurgiCenter representative will contact you the day following your child's operation to see how your child is feeling. If the surgery is on a Friday, you will be contacted Monday.

Turn over for an easy-to-read story for your child.

## Preparing Siblings

It is important to remember that a child's surgery is an important event for siblings, too. You may notice changes in their behavior, such as getting in trouble to get attention, or acting "good as gold." To minimize the effect your child's surgery may have on siblings, it's important to include them in your preparations and recognize common feelings.

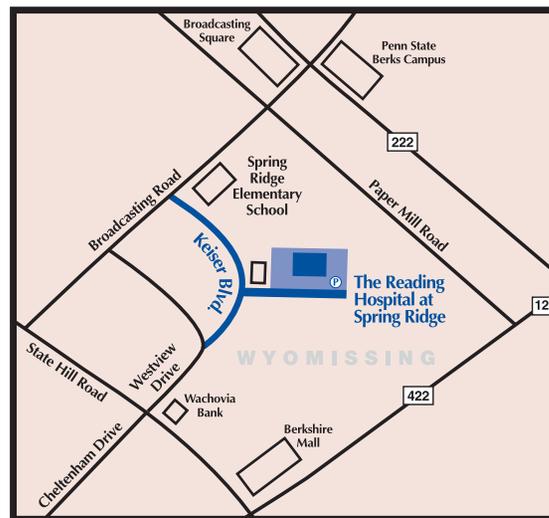
### These include:

- Fear that their brother or sister will be hurt, or might even die. Also, they might be afraid that they will become ill, too.
- Jealousy over the attention that their sibling is receiving. They may even wish that they could have an operation so they can get presents, or have more time and attention from Mom and Dad.
- Guilt that they caused their sibling to become sick or hurt, or because they are healthy while their sibling needs surgery.

### How you can help prepare children for a sibling's operation:

Explain your child's surgery to siblings in terms they can understand, making sure they know why their brother or sister is having an operation. Explain how the surgery will make your child feel better. You may want to read books on the subject to all the children in the family

- Let them know that your child will have same-day surgery, and that you should be home by suppertime. Tell them who will watch them while you are gone.
- Try to give them extra attention.
- Keep care routines as normal as possible.
- Remind them that they are healthy, and that just because their sibling needed an operation, does not mean they will need surgery.



## COMING TO THE SURGICENTER

### From Route 222:

- Take the *Broadcasting Road exit*, and head toward Broadcasting Square.
- Go past the Spring Ridge Elementary School, and turn left onto *Keiser Boulevard*.
- Turn left at the green Reading Hospital sign.
- Go past the first building and driveway.
- This road ends in our large parking lot; our brick building will be on your left.
- Enter through the glass revolving doors.
- Take the elevator to "3."
- Check in at the *Registration Desk* when you arrive.

### From State Hill Road:

- Turn at the traffic light onto *Westview Drive*.
- At the fork, go straight; this is *Keiser Boulevard*. (Westview Drive branches to the left.)
- Turn right at the green Reading Hospital sign.
- Go past the first building and driveway.
- This road ends in our large parking lot; our brick building will be on your left.
- Enter through the glass revolving doors.
- Take the elevator to "3."
- Check in at the *Registration Desk* when you arrive.

## Important Telephone Numbers

Following surgery, call your surgeon immediately if you are concerned about your child.

### The Reading Hospital SurgiCenter at Spring Ridge

**610-568-3050**

Call if you have any questions about the date and time of the procedure, or the care your child will receive.

### Pre-Operative Nurse at the SurgiCenter

**610-568-3024**

Please call if you do not hear from the SurgiCenter within 48 hours of your child's scheduled surgery, or if you have a question about pre-operative instructions that the nurse gave you.

### Billing Questions

**610-568-3070 or 610-568-3072**

Call if you have any questions about your Child's SurgiCenter bill.

## Insurance and Financial Information

The Reading Hospital SurgiCenter at Spring Ridge has worked with your physician's office to obtain the insurance and financial information we need. Following your child's surgery, you will receive a bill from The Reading Hospital SurgiCenter at Spring Ridge.

**Please contact the Surgicenter's Billing Service at 610-568-3070 or 610-568-3072 if you have any questions about the bill or insurance issues.**



2603 Keiser Boulevard  
Wyomissing PA 19610  
**610-568-3050**