

Cleft Lip Repair

Your child is scheduled for surgical repair of his or her cleft lip. You will receive specific pre-operative instructions from the schedulers as well as the hospital prior to surgery.

After surgery, your child will wake up in the recovery room. He or she will then be admitted to the hospital for an overnight stay. You can accompany your child when he or she is transferred to the hospital room, and one or both parents may stay with the child overnight.

You may begin feeding your child (breast or bottle) once he or she has fully awoken from the anesthesia, typically once you reach the hospital room.

After surgery, your child will have soft splints wrapped around the arms. The splints prevent your child from rubbing the lip. These can be easily removed when you are holding your child and have the ability to prevent your baby from rubbing the lip. The arm splints should be worn at all other times for 2 weeks after surgery.

Children can almost always go home the morning after surgery. In some cases, a child may have trouble feeding or need a little more time in the hospital to control pain.

In some cases self-dissolving stitches are used, protected with water-proof tissue glue. In these cases, no cleaning or wound care is required. In other cases, non-dissolving stitches are used and are taken out in the operating room 1 week later. Your doctor will let you know if any wound care is required.

If your child has discomfort, you can safely give children's tylenol, children's motrin, or other pain medication as prescribed by your doctor.

Your doctor may prescribe a short course of antibiotics after surgery.

A postoperative visit is usually scheduled 3 to 4 weeks after surgery. Your doctor will check the lip to see how it is healing and discuss any concerns you have about the lip's appearance.