

Caring for Your Child After Urologic Surgery

Your child's surgery information:

Procedure name: _____

Date: _____

- ☐ Open procedure
- ☐ Laparoscopic procedure

How do I care for my child after surgery?

Showering

- For the first 48 hours (2 days) after surgery, sponge bathe only.
- After 48 hours, it is okay to shower. Let soap and water run over the **incision** (the cut that was made during surgery) and pat the area dry.
- Do not submerge the incision (put it underwater) in a bath for 1 week after surgery.

Swimming

- Your child may swim 2 weeks after surgery.

Returning to daily activities

- It is safe for your child to return to school or day care when their pain is well-controlled and they are not taking opioid pain medications. Opioid pain medications (such as oxycodone, Norco®, Vicodin®, or Hycet®) may affect your child's ability to learn and participate in activities.
- Children 8 years or older should not lift anything heavier than about 10 pounds for 2 weeks after surgery.

- If your child's backpack is heavier than 10 pounds, we recommend asking for another textbook they can keep in class or using a suitcase with wheels to carry their books to and from class.
- For 2 weeks after surgery, your child may not use straddle toys (toys where they're sitting with something between their legs, such as a bike or bouncy chair) or any other activity that puts pressure on the surgical area.
- Holding your child on your hip or using a car seat is safe after surgery.
- Your child may go back to gym or sports activities:
 - 2 weeks after surgery (if your child is 10 years or younger)
 - 4 weeks after surgery (if your child is 11 years or older)

Diet

- Your child may return to eating and drinking their regular diet. They should drink plenty of liquids to stay hydrated and avoid constipation.

Incision care

- We closed your child's incisions with absorbable sutures (stitches) and glue. They will dissolve on their own, and they do not need to be removed.
- If your child has a bandage over their incision site, remove this bandage 2 days after surgery when they are ready for a shower.
- If your child has Steri-Strips™ (thin pieces of tape) under the bandage, take them off 2 weeks after surgery if they have not already fallen off on their own. Do not apply any creams, lotions, or ointments on the wound until the Steri-Strips™ have come off.
- Once their incision site has healed, use sunscreen on the scar for the first year after surgery to minimize scarring.
- If your child had a penile surgery such as a circumcision or hypospadias repair, apply petroleum jelly (such as Vaseline® or Aquaphor®) with

diaper changes for at least 1 week, or twice a day if your child is not in diapers. After 1 week, apply as needed. This helps prevent irritation and keeps the stitches from sticking to their diaper or underwear.

What should I expect for pain?

Your child may have pain around their incision, abdominal (belly) pain, cramping, and even shoulder pain. Abdominal pain felt in the shoulder is called “referred pain,” and this may happen after laparoscopic surgery. This is normal, and it will improve over the next few days.

How do I manage my child’s pain after surgery?

Unless your child’s doctor gives you different instructions, use over-the-counter pain medications such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) around-the-clock for pain control during the first 48 hours after surgery, even if your child is not in pain. **Around-the-clock** means your child will take the medication on a set schedule rather than taking them as needed.

You can also use other non-medication approaches to manage your child's pain. These include spending time with them, playing or doing special projects, eating special foods, allowing them to watch their favorite shows or movies, and using a cold or warm pack. You can find more information on pain control in this online resource: pediatric-trauma.med.umich.edu/injury-prevention/pain-and-medication-resources

What over-the-counter medications will my child be taking?

Acetaminophen (Tylenol®, 15 mg per kg per dose) and **ibuprofen** (Motrin® or Advil®, 10 mg per kg per dose) are available over-the-counter. **Over-the-counter** means you can buy them at a store or pharmacy (before or after surgery) without a prescription.

- The dose you will give your child is determined by their weight. You should use a syringe or dropper to measure all liquid medication. Please do not use a spoon.
- These are very effective pain medications that help with inflammation (redness, swelling, and irritation) after surgery. They are an important part of your child's pain relief.

Do not give ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®) to children under 6 months of age, or if your doctor has told you not to give your child ibuprofen.

- Follow the dosing instructions in your discharge instructions based on your child's weight. Talk to your provider about the maximum (largest) dose you can safely give your child and how often you can give them medication, so you don't give them more medication than recommended.
- **For children 6 months or younger:** Give them acetaminophen every 6 hours while your child is awake.
- **For children older than 6 months:** Give them acetaminophen and ibuprofen together every 6 hours.

What are some tips for safely giving my child medication?

- For liquid medications, check the concentration on the bottle to make sure you're giving the correct milligram-based (mg) dose.
- Only use an oral syringe or medication cup to correctly measure the dose. You can buy these at your pharmacy if they do not come with your medication. Household spoons are not accurate to measure medications.
- If your child resists taking the medication, use the syringe to squirt small amounts of medicine into the side of their cheek. This prevents gagging, and your child is less likely to spit out the medication.
- If your child resists taking pain medication, you may try mixing it with a food or syrup your child enjoys. Some mixes that have worked for other children include mixing medication with a popsicle to make a slushie, or

adding chocolate syrup or applesauce.

- Be careful if you are mixing medication with a food or syrup. If you do this, only mix the medication into a small spoonful of food. Otherwise, if they don't finish it, you won't know how much medication they took.

How can my child take opioid medications safely?

Depending on what type of surgery your child had, you may receive a prescription for opioid pain medication for break-through pain. **Opioids** are strong medications that provide good pain relief but may cause harm if taken in large amounts or for a long time. Examples of opioids that we may prescribe your child are oxycodone, Norco®, Hycet®, or Vicodin®. **Break-through pain** means pain that is not controlled by around-the-clock acetaminophen and ibuprofen.

- Give opioid medications only as needed, and never give them more frequently or in higher doses than instructed on the bottle.
- If your child is prescribed a combination medication which includes an opioid and acetaminophen (such as Vicodin®, Norco®, or Hycet®), do not give them more acetaminophen.
- Never give your child a medication that was not prescribed to them.
- **Medications should always be locked in a safe storage place and managed by a responsible adult.**

What are the risks of opioid medications?

Opioid medications can cause:

- Nausea
- Constipation
- Drowsiness (sleepiness)
- Slowed breathing
- Drug overdose

They are particularly dangerous if taken with alcohol or other medications such as sleep aids or anti-anxiety medications. They can also cause addiction (especially in people with a history of substance abuse or mental health conditions). Do not share these medications with anyone that they were not prescribed to.

How do I dispose of leftover medication?

Old medications are the main cause of poisonings in children under the age of 5. Other people may also be tempted to steal leftover medications. As soon as your child is no longer taking the opioid medication, dispose of (get rid of) the extra medication by bringing them to a take-back program or a collection site in your area. Find more information on how and where to safely dispose of old medications at: bit.ly/MM-MedDisposal.

What can I do to manage my child's constipation?

If your child is taking an opioid medication at least once a day for 2 days, they should also take an over-the-counter stool softener such as MiraLAX® (polyethylene glycol) to avoid constipation. This is available at your local pharmacy, and you do not need a prescription.

- Follow the dose instructions. If you have questions about safe dosing for your child, please contact the clinic.

When can my child start driving?

As long as they are not taking opioid pain medications, teenagers who are licensed to drive can start driving again 2 weeks after surgery. Please contact the clinic or talk with your provider about this at your scheduled after-surgery visit. Before driving, have your child sit behind the wheel in a parked car to

make sure they are able to turn their head and body in the full range of motion without pain.

Who should I call for help?

Your child's pain should slowly improve, and most children are back to normal about 1-2 weeks after surgery.

Call us immediately if their pain suddenly gets worse, or your child develops:

- Nausea that doesn't go away
- Vomiting
- Abdominal (belly) pain
- Diarrhea
- Yellowing of their skin or eyes
- Fever over 101° F
- Redness, bleeding, or drainage (leaking fluid) from the incision sites

Who do I contact if I have questions?

- Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM: Call **(734) 936-7030** and **ask to speak to a Pediatric Urology nurse.**
- After 5:00 PM or on weekends: Call **(734) 936-6267** and **ask to speak with the Pediatric Urology resident on call.**

When you call, you will be asked to leave a message, and a nurse or doctor will call you back as soon as possible. Someone is available to answer your questions 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

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Authors: Courtney Streur, MD MS, Calista Harbaugh, MD, Samir Gadepalli, MD MBA MS
Edited by: Brittany Batell, MPH MSW CHES®

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