

# Cardiovascular Surgery

## Getting Ready for Your Child's Surgery



Children's  
of Alabama®

PEDIATRIC & CONGENITAL  
**HEART**  
Center  
of Alabama

1600 7th Ave S • Birmingham, AL 35233 • [www.childrensal.org](http://www.childrensal.org)

### Make Sure Your Child is Well

- Avoid sick family and friends.
- If your child becomes sick, make an appointment with the child's pediatrician. Notify us after your child has seen the pediatrician.
- It is very important that you call the surgeon's office if your child has had vomiting, diarrhea, or a fever greater than 100.4°. These symptoms could cause a delay in the surgery. The CV Surgeons' office number is 205-934-2419.
- Also, please call your surgeon's office if your child:
  - o Has been exposed to infectious diseases such as measles, mumps or chickenpox
  - o Has had any cold symptoms such as runny nose or cough.
  - o Has had any change in usual health.



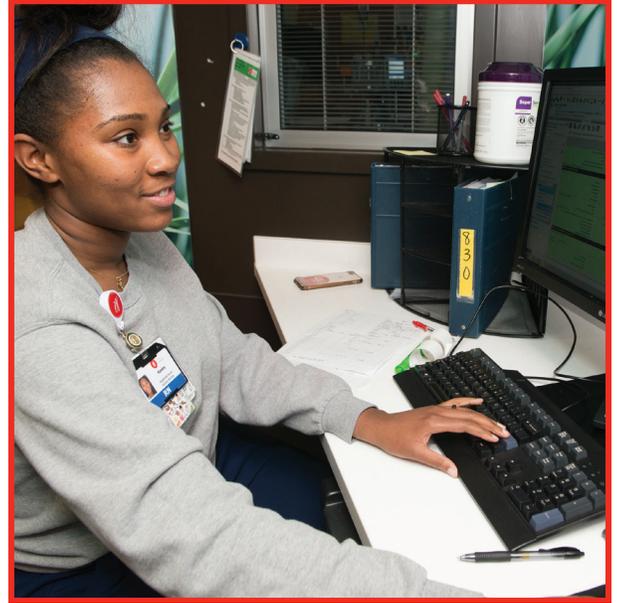
### Medications

- Continue to give your child his/her prescribed medications up until the night before surgery.
- Do not give the medications the morning of the surgery.
- Five days before surgery, stop "over the counter" medications (such as Ibuprofen). It is safe to continue giving Acetaminophen (Tylenol).
  - o If your child routinely takes aspirin or any other blood thinners, we will review this with you by telephone and/or in the letter sent by your surgeon's office.
  - o Contact the office if you have any questions.



## Pre Admission Testing and Tour of the Hospital

- The cardiac surgery office will schedule your child for pre-admission testing (PAT).
  - Please come to the 4th floor of the Benjamin Russell Hospital for Children at your scheduled time.
  - PAT usually occurs 1 to 10 days before surgery.
- Please bring:
  - Insurance and medical assistance information.
  - A list of your child's current medications with doses or bring his/her medications.
  - Name and phone number of your family physician, as well as others involved in your child's healthcare.
- What to expect:
  - The appointment usually takes several hours. Please feel free to bring a snack or formula for your child and a snack for all others that accompany him/her to the visit.
  - Your child will have:
    - A complete physical exam
    - Blood tests
    - Electrocardiogram (EKG)
    - Chest x-ray
    - sometimes an Echocardiogram (Echo)
  - You will meet and talk with the anesthesia team, nurse practitioners, and sometimes the surgeon.
- You have the option to take a tour of the hospital and heart floors. One of our team members will be your tour guide.
  - Please let us know before the PAT appointment if you are interested.
  - We usually ask that you arrive an hour before your PAT appointment if you would like a tour.
- During your PAT appointment, you may meet our child life specialist. Our child life specialist can help you in talking with your child or other children about surgery and the hospital stay.
- We also have a counselor for cardiovascular services. If your child is anxious or you think they need to speak with someone, please let the staff know.



## What to do the Night Before Surgery

- Bathe your child using antiseptic cloths provided at the PAT visit as directed. This will help reduce the risk of skin infection.
- Remove any nail polish, fake nails, jewelry (including any piercings), and makeup that your child is wearing.
- Remove your child's contact lenses and bring his/her glasses with you to the hospital.

## What to Pack

- The hospital will provide diapers, baby wipes, formula, pacifiers, bottles, and hospital gowns for your child. You may wish to bring your own to make your child more comfortable, or if you have a certain item you wish to use.
- Bring the most comfortable and important items for your child, but pack lightly. You will be moving from one unit to the next and items can easily get lost or left behind.
- Bring the items you need for yourself but avoid bringing valuables with you.
- Please label all personal items.

## Items to Bring

- Insurance and/or medical assistance information.
- A list of your child's current medications with doses or bring his/her medications.
- Name and phone number of your family physician, as well as others involved in your child's healthcare.
- "To Mend a Broken Heart" booklet.
- A few familiar objects such as stuffed animals, blankets, or toys.
- Pajamas to wear after surgery. A two-piece set with front buttons or a onesie with snaps in front is best.
- Slippers. Hospital socks are provided. They will be up and walking soon after surgery so foot comfort is important.
- Older children should pack a small bag of activities and books for after surgery.
- Older children will also need loose fitting clothing for after surgery.
- Phone numbers of friends and relatives you may need to call.
- Things to do while you are waiting during your child's surgery, such as a book, needlework project, or word puzzle. If siblings will be in the waiting room, you may want to bring items for them as well.



## Do Not Bring

- Electrical items and small appliances such as irons, televisions and radios. These are fire hazards and are not allowed in the hospital.
- Latex balloons are not allowed in the hospital.
- Flowers are not allowed on the heart floors.

# Day of the Surgery

## Before Arriving to the Hospital

- Be sure your child has carefully followed the eating and drinking restrictions given to you during your PAT appointment. Failure to do so will cause the surgery to be delayed or cancelled.

## At the Hospital

- Arrive at the admission desk on the 4th floor at your scheduled time.
- Make sure you bring your "To Mend a Broken Heart" book.
- Please remember to bring any forms given to you at your child's PAT appointment.
- Your child will change into a hospital gown and receive a brief exam. Be sure to ask any questions you may have and let the staff know of any changes in your child's health since you were last seen.
- Your child will receive another bath using antiseptic cloths.
- Two adults may be in the pre-operative room with your child prior to surgery. Shortly before your child leaves for surgery, any additional visitors/family members will be allowed to see him/her.
- Once your child has been taken to the Cardiovascular Operating Room (CVOR), you will wait in the waiting room located outside of the pre-operative area. This is also the waiting room for the Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit (CVICU) where your child will be after surgery.
- During surgery, you will be updated by the receptionist at the desk.
- Once surgery is over, the receptionist will ask you to follow his/her to a consultation room where the surgeon will talk with you. During this time, your child will be taken to the CVICU.
- Once the doctors and nurses have settled your child into the CVICU, you will be allowed to visit.
- The nurse will discuss your child's lines, tubes, and plan of care at this time.

