

Preparing Your Infant for Surgery

Recognizing what is stressful to infants can guide you when planning for your baby's surgery. Things that are stressful to infants in the hospital may include the following:

- Separation from parents
- Having many different caregivers
- Experiencing strange sights, sounds, and smells
- New and different routines
- Interrupted sleep
- Day and night confusion

How do I prepare my infant for surgery?

- The most important aspect about preparing your infant for surgery is preparing yourself for what to expect on the day of surgery. Be informed, asking questions will alleviate some of your own concerns or fears. Also, try to remain calm since your baby can sense if you are stressed and may also feel stressed.
- Try to get as much rest as possible the night before surgery.
- It is important to keep your baby's routine the same before the day of surgery when possible.
- Bring your baby's favorite cuddle toy, music or security blanket from home to help create a more familiar environment for your baby.
- Let the nursing staff know what your baby's usual schedule is, including sleep patterns and feeding habits.
- Make plans to be with your baby as much as possible so that he/she will have familiar touch, voice and smile. Plan to be with your baby in the recovery room.
- Utilize the playroom for distraction, walk the halls, try rocking, or a warm blanket to comfort your baby during the time before surgery when he/she cannot eat or drink.
- Take care of yourself and take breaks. Simplify your life during this time, and ask for help from family and friends when you need it.