

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Going Home After Surgery

After surgery, children need some time to get back to normal. Here are some things that are important for almost every child who has surgery. Your nurse and doctor will talk to you about these in more detail.

## Activity

- yes  no Your child can do as much as he or she feels like doing.  
If your child has pain, your child should stop doing the activity that brought on the pain. If the pain does not go away, call your child's doctor.
- yes  no Your child can return to school.
- yes  no Your child should not go back to school until \_\_\_\_\_

Your child should not \_\_\_\_\_  
until \_\_\_\_\_

## Keep clean

- Keep the incision dry and clean.
- yes  no You can give your child a shower after \_\_\_\_\_ days and a bath after \_\_\_\_\_ days. Until then, you can wash your child with a wash cloth or sponge.
- yes  no Until all the scabs come off, do not put any creams, oils, or lotions on the incision.
- yes  no Wash the incision every day.

## Incision Care

- Keep the dressings on the incision clean and dry.  
 yes  no Change the dressings on the incision

when: \_\_\_\_\_

- yes  no Remove the dressing

when: \_\_\_\_\_

- Once a day, check the incision for **signs of infection**:
  - redness
  - swelling
  - fluid from the incision
  - pain gets worse at the incision

If you see any signs of infection, call your child's doctor.  
If your child's incision opens or bleeds, call your child's doctor.

## Diet

- yes  no Eating many types of foods will give your child the nutrients to heal.  
Offer your child food he or she likes from all the food groups  
(vegetables, fruits, grains, beans, meat, fish, chicken, eggs, cheese, and milk).
- yes  no Your child may eat his or her usual foods.
- yes  no Your child should eat: \_\_\_\_\_

## Comfort

- Give your child the medicine for pain that the doctor prescribed.
- If your child feels sick to the stomach, give your child medicine for pain with food.
- If the pain medicine does not keep your child comfortable, call your child's doctor.
- If you want more information, ask your nurse for the handout **About Pain** (#472)

## When to call the doctor

Call the doctor if your child has any of these in the first weeks after surgery:

- throws up or is sick to the stomach often
- has loose stools often
- incision is red, swollen, or leaks fluid
- is bleeding from the incision
- pain is getting worse
- has a temperature over 101° F. Give medicine for fever as directed by your child's doctor.

## Now that you've read this

- Do you have a thermometer? Show your nurse or doctor how you take your child's temperature. (Check when done.)
- Tell your child's nurse or doctor what are the signs of infection. (Check when done.)
- How will you know if your child has pain? What will you do if your child has pain? (Check when done.)



If you have any questions or concerns,

- call your child's doctor or
- call \_\_\_\_\_

If you want to know more about child health and illness,  
visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children's Hospital  
1919 East Thomas Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85016  
602-933-1400  
866-933-6459  
[www.phoenixchildrens.org](http://www.phoenixchildrens.org)  
[www.theemilycenter.org](http://www.theemilycenter.org)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/theemilycenter](https://www.facebook.com/theemilycenter)  
Twitter: @emilycenter  
Pinterest: [pinterest.com/emilycenter](https://www.pinterest.com/emilycenter)

**Disclaimer**

The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children's Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.

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#508 • Written by Vicky Pickerel, RN • Updated by Cheryl Gallaga, MSN, RN  
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Si usted desea esta información en español,  
por favor pídasela a su enfermero o doctor.  
#508

Name of Health Care Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Date returned: \_\_\_\_\_  db

# Going Home After Surgery

## Family Review of Handout

Health care providers: Please teach families with this handout.

Families: Please let us know what you think of this handout.

Would you say this handout is hard to read?  Yes  No

easy to read?  Yes  No

Please circle the parts of the handout that were hard to understand.

Would you say this handout is interesting to read?  Yes  No  
Why or why not?

Would you do anything differently after reading  
this handout?  Yes  No

If yes, what?

After reading this handout, do you have any  
questions about the subject?  Yes  No

If yes, what?

Is there anything you don't like about the drawings?

Yes

No

If yes, what?

What changes would you make in this handout to make it better or easier to understand?

Please return your review of this handout to your nurse or doctor or send it to the address below.

The Emily Center  
Health Education Specialist  
Phoenix Children's Hospital  
1919 East Thomas Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85016-7710

602-933-1395

Thank you for helping us!