

PARENT INFORMATION

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR SURGERY DURING THE COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) PANDEMIC

The Government and NHS England have recommended that urgent planned surgery should continue to be prioritised wherever possible during the response to the Covid-19 emergency, along with planning to resume non urgent planned surgery.

At Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals we will do everything we can to provide urgent planned surgery timely and restart introduction of non-urgent planned surgery. Resuming planned surgery will be based on prioritising based on clinical urgency.

Any surgery carries a risk, but if your child has Covid-19 prior to surgery or post-operatively, this can make their recovery more difficult and increase the risk of serious complications. This will be discussed with you by the clinician who talks to you about the surgery being proposed, risk and benefits of the surgery and also the additional risks should your child develop Covid-19.

Planning your child's surgery:

If the procedure is routine your doctor may recommend a delay depending on national / local Covid-19 case figures / trends. If your child has been confirmed to have Covid-19 or is self-isolating due to recent contact with someone who was Covid-19, then planned surgery will be delayed until your child has completed their isolation period. Please discuss with your Consultant, Nurse Specialist or other members of the clinical team about the balance of risk between waiting until the Covid-19 situation has improved (this could be many months) and going ahead with your child's procedure.

You will be contacted by our administration teams who will offer you a date for your child's surgery, and a pre-operative assessment if you have not already had one. The teams will also explain the new safety procedures in place in relation to the pandemic – which includes attending for a covid-19 swab test. The team will aim to address any concerns and questions you may have or direct concerns to another member of the team.

Pre-operative assessment

If your child requires a pre-op assessment, this will take place before your operation, it will be carried out either by telephone where possible, or by a face to face appointment. In order to minimise unnecessary visits to the hospital, face to face pre-op assessment may be undertaken directly following your child's clinic visit and we will aim to ensure that all relevant tests are completed at this point.

Pre-operative swab test Covid-19

You will be asked to attend the Keepmoat Stadium (DN4 5JW) drive-through swab / phlebotomy service approximately 72 hours prior to surgery for your child to have the covid-19 swab taken. Your child will not need to leave the car for this test. If you are being driven there by someone who is not in your immediate household then you and the car driver should wear face masks / face coverings to reduce your risk of developing Covid 19, as even people with no obvious symptoms can have Covid-19 without knowing. If you are unable to attend the drive-through facility please inform the pre assessment nurse or if you have no pre assessment the waiting list administration team who contacted you as we may be able to explore an alternative in exceptional circumstances.

Please note that your child will only be able to have surgery if they have had a pre admission Covid-19 negative test result and they display no Covid-19 symptoms. If we are unable to obtain a swab despite all efforts to do so then the clinical team will contact you as to what this means for your child.

Guidance on self-isolation

National guidance on the need for your child to self-isolate prior to surgery has changed. However it is still important that you take measures to reduce the risk of exposure to covid-19 in the period leading up to your child's admission date. It is important that your child and others in the household follow Government and NHS guidance on regular hand washing for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser, and social distancing, which includes your child not mixing with groups of friends.

Before surgery:

You will receive a phone call the day before your operation to see if you or anyone in the household has developed symptoms, these include:

- A high temperature –feeling hot to touch on chest or back and/or have a temperature above 37.8 (if you have access to a thermometer).

- A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if anyone usually has a cough, it may be worse than usual).
- Any loss or change to sense of smell or taste – this means not able to smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal
- If anyone does develop symptoms please contact 111 for advice. Further information can also be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms>

You and your household will need to follow national guidance and isolate for the agreed time period if anyone does have symptoms. If your child has symptoms they will need a negative Covid-19 swab following isolation before surgery is rescheduled. The clinical team will contact you to explain exactly what to do if your child's swab result shows they have tested positive for Covid-19 and what this means for your surgery.

It is important that you follow this advice to make sure your treatment is as safe as possible.

In the hospital

When arriving at the hospital depending on the admission location (this will be on your admission letter) you should use the following entrances only:

Doncaster Royal Infirmary

Children's Surgical Unit – enter via Gate 5 and access the car park for the Children's Surgical Unit. You do not need to enter any other part of the hospital as the Children's Surgical Unit entrance is directly off from the car park.

Children's Observation Unit/Children's Ward - enter via Gate 1, and access the Women's & Children's Hospital. You need to go to level 5 using the blue designated lift

Bassetlaw Hospital

Children's Ambulatory Care Unit – Enter the hospital via the main entrance and follow the signs for the Children's Ambulatory Care Unit.

**** Please note face masks / coverings should be worn when you enter the hospital buildings (this does not include children 11 years old or under) and hand wash / hand sanitising stations utilised****

Theatres / Recovery and Ward areas

We have arranged to treat patients in hospital as normally as possible – however we are taking steps to deliver planned surgery in protected areas.

Measures have been taken in the operating theatres and wards to reduce the risk of exposure to the Covid-19 virus for both patients and staff. This includes staff wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including: Face masks and Eye Protectors, Aprons and Gowns and as needed gloves. We recognise that staff wearing full PPE can be worrying or intimidating, particularly for young children, but behind the PPE are our usual friendly and caring staff.

Additional cleaning procedures are embedded within the theatre areas to maintain your safety whilst in the theatre environment. If you have any concerns about the cleanliness of the environment or staff processes for hand hygiene or use of PPE during your admission please ask to speak with the department manager or matron.

Contact with family & friends during your hospital stay

During the Covid-19 pandemic we need to restrict visitors, therefore unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to an individual child's needs only one parent is allowed to accompany. Please discuss with your clinical team in advance of admission if you have any concerns regarding this. Due to the visitor restrictions we are unable to allow brothers and sisters to visit. ****These measures are to help reduce the risk of your child developing Covid-19 in the post-operative period, if you have any personal support needs please discuss these at pre-operative assessment****

After your child's surgery:

Your clinical team will tell you how best to look after your child when you are discharged home after surgery. They will also talk through any concerns you may have and answer your questions. They will also recommend if your child needs to self-isolate (other than for medical needs) after surgery and you will be advised of this period. You should continue to follow the National guidance to reduce you and your child's risk of developing Covid-19 after surgery including hand hygiene, social distancing and adults using adults using face masks / face coverings. Contact details will be provided to you on discharge should you have any concerns relating to your surgery once you are home.

Additional Information for you and your child is available at:

<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2020-07/cpoc-my-operation-and-coronavirus-leaflet-for-children-202007.pdf>

https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2020-07/planned-surgery-covid-19-poster-young_people-2020-07.pdf

<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2020-07/planned-surgery-covid-19-poster-parents-carers-2020-07.pdf>