

Your child's dermatology surgery appointment

Information for patients, parents and guardians

Your child has been scheduled to have a minor surgical operation at:
John Atwell Children's day ward, G level, Southampton Children's Hospital, Tremona Road, Southampton SO16 6YD.

The procedure will take place under local anaesthetic (meaning your child will be awake). This factsheet will help give you and your child an idea of what to expect and the preparations you should make.

Planning your trip to and from Southampton Children's Hospital

We recommend that you allow plenty of time to get to the appointment.

We plan our surgical appointment times carefully, but on occasion our doctors may be called away to deal with emergencies, and appointments can sometimes overrun. This could mean that you may experience a wait. We'll always try to keep you informed about any delays that may affect your child's appointment.

If the nature and severity of your child's medical condition means that they are unable to use private or public transport, they may be entitled to patient transport. If you think this is the case, contact your GP if they referred you for treatment, or the hospital department which has asked you to attend.

On the day of the appointment

Eating and drinking

On the day of the operation, we recommend that your child:

- has some breakfast, even if the operation is first thing in the morning
- eats normally and drinks plenty of fluids

Medication

- Your child should take all their regular medications as usual on the day of their surgery.
- If they have been prescribed antibiotics to take before the operation, please follow the instructions about when to take them.
- Please inform your child's dermatology doctor if your child is taking any medication to thin their blood, or if they have any bleeding disorders.

What to bring with you

- A list of your child's medications and any allergies.
- Something which will occupy and put your child at ease during the procedure such as a toy, book, music with headphones or portable computer game.

The operation itself

Your child's surgeon will explain the specific details regarding your child's operation.

The following points are a general guide:

- your child must be accompanied on the day by a parent or legal guardian
- the operation will be performed under local anaesthetic so your child will be awake
- you can expect to stay on John Atwell day ward for one to two hours in total, depending on the complexity of the operation
- a local anaesthetic cream will be applied to the skin approximately 30 minutes before surgery to help numb the area before the local anaesthetic injection
- the local anaesthetic injection may be uncomfortable initially, usually for less than a minute, but sometimes longer for larger operations. Some procedures may require more than one injection. The local anaesthetic cream will reduce this discomfort and may even eliminate it
- once the local anaesthetic is given, your child should not feel any pain, but some pressure or a pushing/pulling sensation is normal
- stitches will be inserted and a dressing applied, (though in some cases stitches may not be needed)

After the operation

When your child's surgeon has finished the operation:

- you will be given written instructions about caring for your child's wound/s, including when and where they will need to have their stitches removed
- you will be given contact details in the event of any concerns, but please ask if anything is unclear
- your child may have a large bandage/dressing in place for a few days
- bruising and swelling may occur initially, particularly after surgery on the face. This may include a 'black eye'
- any surgery will leave a scar as the surgeon has cut into the skin, and possibly some numbness around the wound area, this usually improves with time
- your child should continue to take all of their usual medications, unless you are advised otherwise

Activities

We recommend that after the operation your child:

- goes home and rests – this will help to reduce the risk of any bleeding
- does not swim, play sport or do heavy lifting until after their stitches have been removed. This is normally between 7 and 14 days after the operation

Unexpected complications

Complications which can occasionally occur include bleeding, a wound infection, or stitches coming open. You will be given written instructions about how to seek help if any of these occur.

Results

Your child's results will be sent out in the post, along with details of their follow-up appointment, if one is required. This usually takes four to six weeks.

Additional advice

Depending on the location of the surgery, there may be some additional things to consider.

If your child's surgery is:

- **Near the mouth:** Your child will need to eat soft or 'sloppy' foods which require little chewing for two days after their operation.
- **Lower leg/foot/ankle:** Your child will need to rest for up to two weeks, with their foot elevated as much as possible. It's helpful to bring a loose fitting shoe/sandal or slipper to fit over the bandages.
- **Face or scalp:**
 - There may be a large bandage over your child's head, so they may wish to wear a loose fitting hat or cap for the trip home.
 - Your child will need to wear a top that opens at front, so that they don't need to pull anything over their head.
- **Chest/abdomen/arms:** Wearing a top that opens at the front will make dressing/undressing easier.

Further information

Should you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call us for advice.

Dermatology surgery bookings: 023 8082 5804

John Atwell day ward: 023 8120 6157

Dermatology secretaries: 023 8082 5458 or 5459

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audiotape, please telephone **023 8120 4688** for help.

www.uhs.nhs.uk/childrenshospital

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