

After careful evaluation of your child's oral condition, it has been decided that the required dental care can best be accomplished in the hospital operating room under a general anesthetic. This will allow us to provide the highest quality care in a controlled environment. As a parent, you naturally will be somewhat apprehensive about your child's hospitalization. Please, read the information and instructions we provide to you very carefully to familiarize you with what to expect during your child's brief hospital stay.

The procedure to be performed is called "comprehensive oral rehabilitation". It is an elective surgery, which means that it should be done only when your child is in **optimal health**. If he/she has a fever, ear infection, runny nose, bad cough, congestion, diarrhea, or any other medical conditions please notify us immediately. Also, call us immediately if your child becomes exposed to any contagious illness. We will need to reevaluate their condition, and if indicated, reschedule the surgery date.

Children who have been prepared for the hospital experience have few behavioral problems afterwards. If asked, give your child honest and reassuring explanations to their questions. State the facts as clearly and simply as you can in terms they can understand. A simple statement such as "while you are sleeping the dentist is going to wash and polish your teeth" is most often sufficient for pre-school children. Avoid using fear-provoking words such as hurt, needle, shot, bleed, and drill. Avoid discussing any non-positive personal dental experiences in front of your child. **Try to maintain a positive attitude about the experience**, as your child may sense any anxiety on your part.

The checklist we will give to you has been prepared to assist you in understanding the usual sequence of events. This is very important since your child's initial exam will be accomplished in our clinic. Required treatment will be provided by Dr. Maria Laura Ybarra and will take place at **Samaritan Medical Center, in Watertown**. Following completion of treatment, your child will need a post-operative evaluation usually one or two weeks after treatment. Then your child will need to be seen for dental check-ups every 3 months for one year unless discussed otherwise.

Following our discussion, feel free to ask whatever questions you may have before you leave the office. We strongly believe that the day of the surgery should be all about your child and all questions and concerns should have been addressed by then. Any misunderstanding may result in cancellation of the procedure and waste valuable operating room time. With your assistance, it is our goal to provide your child with the best dental care possible.

## FAST FACTS ABOUT ANESTHESIA AND PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

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General anesthesia is a controlled state of unconsciousness that eliminates awareness, movement and discomfort during dental treatment.

- ☞ Your child's dentist will recommend general anesthesia to perform dental treatments only if it is needed.
- ☞ Your child will sleep through the procedure and have no memory of it.
- ☞ When anesthesia is needed, there are special rules for eating and drinking at home before the procedure.
- ☞ Your child will have some restrictions after the procedure.
- ☞ You should plan to stay at the hospital for most of the day until the anesthesia has completely worn off and it is safe for your child to go home.

## GENERAL ANESTHESIA

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To keep your child safe and comfortable during a dental procedure, your child's dentist might decide to use general anesthesia in the operating room. General anesthesia also may be used if your child needs extensive or complicated procedures that will take a long time to complete, or needs several procedures done all at the same time. A pediatric anesthesiologist — a doctor who specializes in anesthesia for children — will give your child the medications that will make him or her sleep soundly during the procedure.



General anesthesia makes your child's whole body go to sleep. It is needed for certain dental procedures and treatments so that his or her reflexes will be completely relaxed. Your child will feel no pain during the procedure, nor have any memory of it.

## HOME PREPARATION

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When general anesthesia is needed, there are important rules for eating and drinking that must be followed in the hours before the procedure. One business day before your child's procedure, you will receive a phone call from a scheduling nurse. Calls are not made on weekends or holidays. Please have a pen and paper ready to write down these important instructions. The nurse will give you specific eating and drinking instructions for your child based on your child's age.

If your child takes daily medication, you may give it unless specifically told not to do so by your child's doctor or the scheduling nurse.

You are welcome to bring your child's favorite blanket or stuffed animal to the hospital. Your child will be allowed to bring it inside the room with him/her for comfort.

We **STRONGLY** recommend that you bring a change of clothes for your child.

## GOING TO SLEEP

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- 🦷 Once your child has been registered for the procedure, a member of the hospital staff will meet with you and direct you and your child to Pre-Operative holding area.
- 🦷 Once there, your child will be asked to change his clothes and wear a hospital gown. He/she will be able to keep underwear and socks on. If your child prefers to keep his/her PJs on, this can be arranged only in special circumstances.
- 🦷 The nurse in charge of your child will take your child's vital signs, weight, and medical history. As the parent or legal guardian, you will be asked to sign a consent form before the anesthesia is given.
- 🦷 The anesthesiologist doctor and the nurse anesthetist will meet with you and your child to review your child's medical information and decide which kind of sleep medication your child should receive. This is the time for you to ask any questions regarding the anesthesia part of the procedure.
- 🦷 If your child is very scared or upset, the anesthesia doctor may give a special medication to help him or her relax. This medication is flavored and takes effect in about 10 to 15 minutes.
- 🦷 Dr. Ybarra will meet with you at the pre-operative holding area and go over the proposed treatment with you. You will be asked to sign a consent for the dental part of the treatment. If you, as a parent, feel that your child is very anxious and would like him to relax before the procedure, please ask the anesthesia doctor if he/she would be willing to administer this medication to your child. The sooner you bring this up to the medical staff, the faster your child will be treated, and any unnecessary delays will be avoided.
- 🦷 Once the room and team are ready, your child will be taken to the operating room by anesthesia. You will be directed to the waiting room area. Please, understand that because the operating room is considered an sterile area, **you will NOT be allowed to accompany your child beyond the pre-operative holding area into the treatment room.** If this may represent a conflict for you, please let us know during the pre-surgery consultation appointment so we can try to make this transition as smooth as possible for you and your child.
- 🦷 Once your child is in the room, he will be transferred to a bed, and a small mask lined with Chapstick will be placed over your child's nose and mouth. Chapstick® will help prevent your child's lips from become too dry while the mask is in place. The medicine that is directed into the mask — nitrous oxide — will help your child relax and will make your child sleep.
- 🦷 Once your child is asleep, intravenous (IV) sedation will be started so that medication can be given to keep him or her sleeping throughout the procedure. IV sedation requires a needle to be inserted into your child's vein, usually in the arm or hand. Remember, your child will be already asleep during the placement of the IV, so he/she will have no recollection of this procedure.
- 🦷 During the procedure, your child's heart rate, blood pressure, and other vital functions will be closely monitored.

- 🦷 Once the comprehensive dental treatment is completed, Dr. Ybarra will meet with you to explain all the treatment that was done and what to expect.
- 🦷 You will be directed to the recovery area by a nurse, where you be able to stay with your child once he is stable and awake. He/she will be then transferred to advanced recovery, and from there, your child will be discharged home.



## HOW TO COMFORT YOUR CHILD BEFORE GENERAL ANESTHESIA

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As a parent, watching your child undergo anesthesia may be a very uncomfortable experience for you. Children can sense a parent's concern — so for your presence to be helpful to your child, you must try to be as calm and encouraging as possible. There are ways you can help your child, even if you feel uncomfortable.

You can bring along a “comfort” item — such as a favorite toy, stuffed animal or “blankie”— for your child to hold during the induction.

## FOLLOWING GENERAL ANESTHESIA

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Once the procedures have been completed, your child will be taken to the recovery room where nurses will carefully check his or her vital signs.

When you first see your child, he/she may be crying. Please, be assured that your child is NOT IN PAIN, since we take every measures to make sure your child does not experience any pain upon awakening.

One of the medications we use during general anesthesia can cause itching of the face. Make sure to prevent your child from scratching his/her face with the hand where the IV was placed. This will prevent any injuries to your child's eyes.

Because your child's mouth and teeth will be numbed for a few hours following the dental treatment, please watch him/her closely to prevent any injuries from biting or sucking on lips and/or cheeks. The effects of general anesthesia can last for many hours.

- 🦷 Your child's nose, mouth, and throat may remain numb for 30 to 45 minutes after the procedure.
- 🦷 Your child's throat may remain slightly sore for 1 to 2 days after general anesthesia.
- 🦷 Your child's gums and mouth may be sore for several days afterward, depending on the dental procedure.
- 🦷 Use caution when your child eats and drinks for about 30 to 40 minutes after the procedure.
- 🦷 Your child may feel dizzy or feel like vomiting.
- 🦷 Give your child only soft foods for the first few hours after undergoing anesthesia.

## AT-HOME CARE AND FOLLOW-UP VISITS

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- 🦷 Your child is not to return to school or day care that day, and you may need to see how he or she feels the next day. Sometimes the effects from general anesthesia — usually tiredness — can last into the next day. Your child will need to remain at home where an adult can monitor him or her.
- 🦷 Upon returning home, your child may only have minimal activity for the remainder of the day.
- 🦷 Your dentist will tell you when you should schedule a follow-up visit.



## WHEN TO CALL THE DENTIST

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If your child's gums are sensitive, Tylenol® or Motrin® will help with any discomfort. If your child experiences the following for more than 24 hours following dental surgery done with anesthesia in the operating room, you should call the dentist:

- 🦷 fever
- 🦷 severe bleeding of the gums
- 🦷 severe pain
- 🦷 severe vomiting or dizziness

If your child has any of these symptoms, call the office at 315-681-6818 immediately. If we are not available, please leave a message and we will return your call. You can also take your child to the ER at your nearest hospital.



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