

Uncomplicated Appendicitis

Criteria Led Discharge Pathway

Your child has had an operation to remove their appendix ("appendicectomy"). The appendix is a small part of bowel that is connected to the bottom right hand side of the large intestine (the caecum). Appendicitis is caused by a blockage or infection of the appendix. The appendix has no use to the proper workings of the bowel and this is the reason why a person can live a healthy life without their appendix.

The clinical team (nurses and doctors) will decide with you when your child is ready for home (discharge). To make sure your child has a swift recovery and can get home soon we use a number of criteria, or deciding factors to help us. This is called the criteria led discharge (CLD) pathway. You can expect your child to be discharged as soon as they are medically fit, and this is usually approximately 24 hours after surgery

What is uncomplicated appendicitis?

Inflammation and infection of the appendix is called appendicitis. Uncomplicated appendicitis means that your child's appendix had not "popped" or burst (perforated) and was relatively mild and in the early stages of the disease process

What to expect after surgery

Your doctor(s) will come and visit you and your child after surgery. The nursing team will closely watch and care for your child during their hospital stay

Diet and fluids

Your child can start by drinking clear fluids after the operation, and then try some light food

Your child will return from their operation with an intravenous (I.V.) cannula ("drip") so that I.V. fluids can be given for hydration, as well as medications if needed

The I.V. fluids will be stopped 2 hours after the operation if your child is drinking well

Your child might feel a little sick (nausea) or vomit after the operation. Medications can be given to help this, so please tell your nurse if your child feels sick or vomits

Mobilising

Encouraging your child to get up and move around as soon as possible can help with their recovery

Your nurse will let you know when your child is ready to get out of bed. This is normally within 8 hours of the operation.

Pain relief

Your child will be given pain relief that is either syrup or tablets

Antibiotics

Your child will need one more dose of antibiotics via the I.V. after their operation.

GOALS FOR DISCHARGE

(child or care giver to tick once complete)

- I can get out of bed and walk around the ward on my own
- I have been to the toilet without a problem
- I have only needed Paracetamol ("Panadol") &/or Ibuprofen ("Nurofen") for pain
- I can eat and drink without feeling "sick"
- There is no ooze or redness on my wounds
- I have had my 1 dose of antibiotics via my I.V.



Discharge Care

- Reduce your child's activities for about 2 weeks following surgery (including sport)
- Your child will need to stay home from school, kindergarten or childcare for up to 1 week
- Bath or shower your child as normal. Wounds/dressings can get wet and any dressings should be "patted" gently dry with a towel afterwards
- Any sutures ("stitches") will be dissolvable
- You should aim to keep any wound dressings on for 1 week. If the dressings fall off by themselves before this then the wound may be left open or covered with a simple dressing like a "Band-aid"
- Sometimes clear wound "glue" is used on the wound(s). This does not need a dressing over it, and will fall off by itself. Your child should avoid picking at the wound glue
- Observe wounds for signs of infection. These include warmth at the site, pus/ooze, smelly odour, swelling, redness, fever or pain. If any of these signs are present consider having your child reviewed by a doctor. Some bruising can be expected, but if you are concerned, seek medical advice from the hospital
- Use paracetamol (Panadol) as the first pain relieving medication, adding ibuprofen (Nurofen) if further pain relief is needed

Seek immediate medical attention if your child has a fever, increasing pain, vomiting, or for any other concerns

Follow up

- A follow up telephone call (phone consultation) will be made approximately two weeks after discharge from hospital
- At this call we will discuss any test results and check on your child's recovery. If there are any concerns raised at this time we can arrange an appointment to see a doctor in the outpatients department at the hospital

If you have any concerns after your child leaves hospital please telephone your GP, private doctor or the WCH on (08) 8161 7000 and ask to speak to the Surgical Registrar on-call



For more information

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Women's and Children's
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