

# What happens when I go to hospital?

## Arrival

People go to hospital for different reasons – to have a baby, to treat an injury or to help their body work better.

The day you come to Cabrini might involve an early start. You might be hungry as the doctor or pre-admission nurse may have asked you not to eat dinner or breakfast, because you need to have an empty tummy before an operation.

When you arrive at hospital, follow the signs from the carpark to the front desk or 'reception'. Your mum or dad will fill out some paperwork, then a Cabrini staff member will bring you all to the Paediatric Ward (often called the children's ward).

## Admission

A ward nurse will greet you and your parents. They will complete the paper work for your 'admission' by asking you and your parents some questions, weighing you and doing some 'observations' such as measuring your temperature, blood pressure, heart rate and breathing rate.

The nurse will put two paper bracelets on your wrist or ankle that have your name and a patient number on them. Your bracelet will be looked at and checked by many nurses and doctors during your stay at Cabrini.

You will be asked if you have any allergies many times. If you do have an allergy please tell the first nurse and they will put a red bracelet on you to let everyone know you have an allergy.

If you are having an operation or an infusion, you will need to have a cannula put into your hand or arm. This is a very fine plastic tube that is inserted with a tiny needle. The needle is taken out and the fine plastic tube stays in your hand or arm, so the doctors and nurses can give you medicine. The nurse may put some special numbing cream (called Angel Cream) on your hand or arm before the cannula is put in so you don't feel the tiny needle too much.



The nurse will ask you to take off any nail polish and jewellery, or they might put tape on your earrings. If you are given a hospital gown to put on, you will leave your underpants on but take off any other underwear. Your clothes will be put in a basket and be at your bedside or chair after the operation. If you have long hair, it is best to have it tied up or in a plait or braid.

If you are having an operation, the anaesthetist (a special doctor who gives you the medicine to go to sleep) will have a chat with you and your mum or dad.

## Going to theatre

You will wait in the ward until it is time to go to theatre (where you go for the operation). We hope that this is a short wait, but sometimes delays can occur. There is free WiFi at Cabrini so remember to bring your phone or iPad to use while waiting.

A transport staff or 'orderly' will take you to theatre in a wheelchair, trolley, bed or cot. You will have a warm blanket on you and either Mum or Dad will walk next to you. If you are under three, they can put your bottle/sippy cup, spare nappy and dummy under the cot. You can take your favourite toy or teddy with you to theatre.

## At the theatre

Mum or Dad can stay with you when the anaesthetist gives you the medicine to go to sleep. They may put a mask on your face that might smell yummy. See if you can count to ten before you fall asleep.



## During the operation

Mum or Dad can wait in the theatre waiting room and if they have time, they can go to the café on the ground floor to get something to eat or drink and then come back to the waiting room.

## After the operation

When the operation is over, you will be taken to the recovery room called PACU (Post Anaesthetic Care Unit) where you will wake up. The recovery nurse will tell your mum or dad to come in and measure your blood pressure, pulse and breathing rate. The doctor who performed your operation will speak to your mum or dad while you are there. You might even get an icy pole and babies might have a bottle.



## Heading back to the ward

A children's ward nurse will meet you in recovery and talk to the recovery nurse. An orderly will take you back to the ward with Mum or Dad and the nurse.

## Back in the ward

If you have come to Cabrini for a day operation you will rest and recover in a big recliner chair in the day room from half an hour to four hours, depending on your operation and how you are feeling.

If your doctor would like you to stay in hospital overnight, you will recover in a ward bed in a single or shared room – we never know until the day, as it depends on how many children are staying in hospital overnight and why they are in hospital.

The nurses will 'take your obs', that is, measure your heart rate, blood pressure, breathing rate and temperature and check your wound many times while you are recovering.



You will be given something to eat and drink and medication to help, if you are feeling a bit sore or sick which can happen after an operation.

Each room has a fold out bed and sheets and blankets for either Mum or Dad, so they can stay with you overnight. You and your mum or dad can order your meals from a menu each day – there is a special children's section at the back of the menu.

## Infusions and vaccinations and other non-surgical day admissions

If you have come to Cabrini for a short procedure such as an infusion, your admission will be the same as described above, but you will stay in the day room, in a recliner chair, while you have your infusion. Mum or Dad can stay with you in the day room. Don't be shy; feel free to ask your nurse any questions. You can watch TV, read or use your device. You will have food and drink given to you during your stay.

## Going home

When you are fully recovered and feeling good, you will be ready to go home. The nurses will make sure you don't feel dizzy or sore and can walk around easily. They will take out the cannula if you have one and give your parents some information. This will include a summary of your hospital stay, the names of any medicines needed at home and when to have them, details of how to look after your wound if you have one and if and when you will need to see your doctor again.



You may need some time off school to recover from your hospital stay. The doctor and nurses will let you know how long this should be. If you have been in for a day stay only, it would be a good idea to have a quiet, restful evening.

We have information sheets on many common reasons children might need to be in hospital. You can access these from: [www.cabrini.com.au/paediatricsheets](http://www.cabrini.com.au/paediatricsheets)

We hope that when you come to the children's ward we can help to make your stay as comfortable as possible. We look forward to greeting you on your arrival.

From all of the paediatric staff at Cabrini.