

## Community Dental Services

### Your child's general anaesthetic appointment



# What is a general anaesthetic?

A general anaesthetic is a state of controlled unconsciousness and freedom from pain.

General anaesthetics are given by anaesthetists. They are doctors with specialist training in looking after patients when they are anaesthetised.

## Important information

- An adult with parental responsibility must attend the general anaesthetic appointment with your child.
- You must follow the fasting/ starving instructions given to you.
- The appointment will be postponed if the instructions in this leaflet are not followed.

## Before the appointment

- Contact the clinic where your child was assessed if you want to discuss the treatment further.
- Explain to your child what will happen at the appointment.
- Inform the clinic of any changes in your child's health.
- Let us know as soon as possible if you are unable to attend.

Please visit the Royal College of Anaesthetists website to help prepare your child for a general anaesthetic. This website has useful stories and videos:

<https://rcoa.ac.uk/patients/patient-information-resources/information-children-parents-carers>

There are also easy read leaflets to help prepare children and young people with learning difficulties:

<https://rcoa.ac.uk/patients/patient-information-resources/easy-read-accessible-resources>

## Fasting/starving instructions

You will be given fasting/starving instructions to follow which are specific to the hospital where your child is going to attend for their general anaesthetic.

It is essential that fasting/starving instructions are followed. It is very important that your child has an empty stomach on the day of the appointment.

Fasting/starving includes NOT allowing your child to chew gum or sweets, as this fills your child's stomach with saliva and increases the risk of vomiting.

## **On the day of the appointment**

- Keep your child off school or nursery and directly supervise them so that you are certain your child is starved.
- Your child must not brush their teeth after 7am on the morning of the appointment
- Give your child their normal medication. If your child uses an inhaler, bring it with you.
- Follow the fasting/starving instructions.
- Dress your child in casual clothes and flat shoes; tie long hair back and remove earrings and nail varnish.
- You may bring another adult with you but please do not bring any other children.

## **In the treatment room**

- There will be an anaesthetist, the dentist and nurses in the treatment room.
- Your child will sit on the dental chair or treatment couch/bed, and you can hold their hand. If your child is very young, they can sit on your lap.
- You can wait with your child until they are asleep. You will then be asked to wait outside the treatment room. Your child will only be asleep for a few minutes.
- The anaesthetist will stay with your child during treatment. They will carefully monitor your child until they are ready to be discharged to the recovery room.
- Your child may breathe the anaesthetic gas via a facemask, or a tube held close to their face, or your child may have an injection in the back of their hand or arm.
- The dentist may be able to tell you which method the anaesthetist will use at the assessment appointment.

## **In the recovery room**

- Your child will still be monitored in the treatment room.
- You will be given information about looking after your child's mouth for once you get home.
- Your child will be allowed to go home once the dental team are happy that your child has recovered from the anaesthetic and bleeding from their mouth has stopped.

## Going home

- We recommend travelling home with your child by car or taxi.

## At home

- Have pain relief ready in case your child needs it, for example paracetamol or ibuprofen. Follow the instructions on the packet.
- Contact your dental surgery if you are at all concerned.
- Plan quiet activities such as reading, drawing or watching television.
- Your child should feel able to go to school the next day. If not, plan another quiet day at home.

Your child may be receiving care from other healthcare services within the NHS. So that we can all work together for your child's benefit, we may need to share information about them.

If you would like to comment/complain about any aspect of our service, please contact the Community Dental Service clinic where the initial assessment was carried out.

## Out of hours emergencies contact

### Cheshire and Merseyside areas:

Telephone: 0161 476 9651 - available from 9am to 9.30pm every day, including weekends and Bank Holidays. Please call NHS 111 outside of these hours.

### Greater Manchester areas:

Telephone: 0333 332 3800 - available between 5pm and 10pm Monday to Friday and between 8am and 10pm each weekend and Bank Holidays.

**For impartial and confidential advice or information on the services provided by Bridgewater or to receive this leaflet in an alternative format call our Patient Services team on 0800 587 0562.**