



Department of Orthopaedic Surgery Shared Decision-Making Pre-Operative Guide

Thank you for trusting us with your child's care. Each of us is committed to treating you and your child like members of our own family. Your orthopaedic provider has recommended surgery for your child. The thought of your child having surgery can be stressful and we are here to support you. Every team member is focused on your child's safety and well-being.

We also want you to take an active role in your child's care. If you have any questions regarding your child's surgery or information covered in this guide, please let us know. We want to partner with you to decide if and when your child is ready for surgery.

This guide will help you understand more about your child's surgical experience. Hang on to it and read it when you can. We hope this information here can help you and your family have a better experience before, during and after your child's surgery.

Our goal is to give every child the best outcome and experience. We appreciate your confidence. We would like to work together with you to provide the best possible outcome.

You can use this guide to ensure that:

- You know about the risks and benefits of surgery for your child
- You make a shared decision to undergo surgery with your child's providers
- Your child is as healthy as possible going into surgery
- You can help best prepare your child for surgery

There are a lot of things to think about! **TAKE YOUR TIME.** It may take a couple months or longer to get ready for surgery.

Work with your child's healthcare providers on the topics and sections. Different providers may help with different parts of the guide. For example, your child's surgeon may help you with some parts and your child's primary care doctor or other specialists may help with others. Remember, all these requirements do not have to be completed in order. Take it slow and take notes as you go.

**Adapted from AACPD Care Pathway for Major Musculoskeletal Surgery in Children with Cerebral Palsy*

A. Things to Talk About with Your Child’s Healthcare Providers

- Hopes and goals for surgery:** *What do you hope to get out of the surgery for your child?*

- Risk factors and complications:** *Is my child healthy enough to have surgery? What risk factors does my child have that may affect how well they do after surgery? What are the potential complications of surgery? How likely are they to happen?*

- My child’s health with and without surgery:** *What will my child’s health look like with surgery? What will my child’s health look like without surgery?*

- Family and social things:** *What things about our family’s work and jobs, school, social support, etc. should we be thinking about with regards to surgery? Do we have a reliable form of transportation to my child’s surgery and follow-up appointments? (If NO, speak to an orthopaedic nurse to assist with planning transportation.) Do you have to take time off work after surgery?*

- Recovery process and duration of surgery:** *How many days will my child likely stay in the hospital after surgery? When can my child go back to school? How long will it take my child to fully recover from surgery? When will we be expected to follow up after surgery?*

B. Pre-operative Health, Social, and Family Review

It is very important that your child’s health and well-being are reviewed ahead of surgery. Discuss the following things about your child’s health with your provider or other specialist.

- Nutrition:** *Does my child weigh enough or too much for surgery and to safely heal from it? How can we improve my child’s nutrition to allow for the best outcome?*

- Bone Health:** *Does my child need to increase their dietary calcium intake or start supplementation with Vitamin D and Calcium? How does bone health affect my child’s outcome from surgery?*

- Breathing:** *Does your child have any trouble breathing while awake or asleep? Does your child snore loudly? Have they/or anyone in the family had trouble with anesthesia before?*

- Other chronic health problems:** *List your child's health care conditions (seizures, skin injury, lung or heart conditions, etc.). Do any of the conditions require specific treatment or attention before or after surgery?*

- Medical devices:** *List your child's medical devices. Are the medical devices working properly (like they should)? Would the device affect your child's health and safety during surgery? (wheelchair, hooyer lift, g-tube, CPAP, etc.)*

- Medications** *List your child's medications. Do any of them need special plans for surgery?*

- Pain:** *How does your child express that they are in pain? How much pain is your child in right now? What can be done to treat your child's pain before surgery?*

C. Things to Work on to Make Sure Your Child is Healthy and Safe for Surgery

Make a list and plan of action with your child's providers of things to accomplish before surgery.

D. Make a Shared Decision About Surgery

Make sure you have talked about your thoughts and feelings about surgery with your child's surgeon and other healthcare providers. *How well do the benefits of the surgery outweigh the risks? What is the best decision? To do surgery or not?*

