

10 tips to prepare your child for their surgery/procedure

late elementary school to adolescents

1. **Be honest and truthful.** Stress that children don't know about before is harder to deal with than stress they know about and are ready for. Help your child understand what will be happening.
2. **Listen to your child.** Find out what your child thinks is going to happen at the hospital so that you can clear up any misunderstandings he or she might have.
3. **Answer your child's questions honestly and simply.**
4. **Show your child pictures of the hospital and the surgery area.**
5. **Talk about how he or she will feel after the procedure.**
6. Pre-teens and adolescents can be scared about anesthesia (that they won't be able to sleep, will wake up during their procedure, or won't wake up after). **Help your child understand that the anesthesiologist will be giving them the anesthesia medicine continuously during his or her procedure.** When the surgeon is finished with the procedure, then the anesthesiologist will stop giving your child the medicine and your child will automatically wake up.
7. **Make sure your child knows he or she will never be alone.**
8. **Give your child choices.** Giving your child choices gives them control in an environment they don't have control over.
9. If your child is **over the age of 10**, let them know they will be getting an IV. Make sure he or she understands that the IV is actually a straw and that the needle doesn't stay in his or her body.
10. **Support his or her feelings.** Don't make your child feel embarrassed about the way they feel concerning the hospital. Sometimes teens can react to feelings of anxiousness in ways that don't make sense to adults (like anger, disinterest and depression). Support your child's feelings and help them cope with their emotions.

