



## ***Discharge advice for parents whose baby has had cleft lip and anterior palate surgery (page 1 of 2)***

The hospital experience is strange and unsettling for some children, so do not be surprised at changes in behaviour when you get home – for example, your child may be more clingy, easily upset, or have disturbed sleep. It is usual for babies to take 2 or 3 weeks to get back into their usual sleep routine, especially if they have previously slept through the night.

1. Continue with the feeding method you have been using. The nurse specialists will visit you at home to assess progress.
2. Giving medicine regularly to relieve pain is important. The ward nurses will give you advice about this.
3. A week's course of antibiotic medicine is given to help prevent any infection
4. The stitches are dissolvable and may take a month to completely disappear.
5. The lip wound is protected by a layer of skin glue which gives it a blue/purple appearance. The glue should be left to come off on its own, this can take up to 14 days after surgery
6. If your baby uses a dummy, its use will need to be slightly restricted after surgery. It can still be used to offer comfort to stop baby crying.
7. It is usual for the lip scar to appear red and lumpy. After about a month it will gradually become paler and flatter. From 4 weeks after surgery start massaging the lip scar twice a day with a non-scented moisturising cream. Your nurse specialist can give you advice about this. Massage helps to reduce lumpy scar tissue and can improve scar appearance.
8. To prevent infection occurring give cooled boiled water after all feeds, (to clean away any food or milk from the stitches), for 2 weeks after the operation.
9. It is helpful to nurse your baby as upright as possible for the first week after surgery to encourage the swelling to go down.
10. To prevent damage to the wound, try to keep your baby's hands from their mouth. Also, all toys played with should be soft, again to prevent damage to the wound if toys are put in the mouth. This advice should be followed for 4 weeks after surgery.
11. Your baby may have moulding stitches on the inside of the nose to help reshape it. You will notice them because they cause indented areas on the skin. They are dissolvable (this can take 3 months) and will leave no visible marks.

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If you need your information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact Customer Care on 0800 374 208 or send an email to: [customercare@salisbury.nhs.uk](mailto:customercare@salisbury.nhs.uk)

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: [www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily](http://www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily) or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: [patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk) if you would like a reference list.

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12. Because scar tissue burns very easily, when out in the sun, use a hat to shade the lip and then after 6 weeks use a total sun block cream for a period of 2 years after surgery (you can then reduce the factor according to your baby's skin type and age).
13. **Please note** – on discharge from hospital we recommend that an adult sits next to your child in the car. This is so he/she can be observed on the journey home to ensure their safety after surgery.

**Record of medicines to take home:**

Name of medicine				
Strength of medicine				
Dose of medicine				
How often?	Every ..... hours	Every ..... hours	Every ..... hours	Every ..... hours
Date and time of last dose, before leaving hospital				
When is the next dose due?				
Special directions (e.g. before or after food)				

**Other instructions:**

Form completed by: .....

Date: .....

An outpatient's appointment for your baby to be seen in the Combined Cleft Clinic will be sent to you in the post.

Contact telephone numbers to use if you are worried about your baby are below:

**Nichola Hudson**     ☎ **0771 780 5724**  
**Maureen Warren**    ☎ **0771 780 5721**  
**Sarum Ward**            ☎ **01722 336262 ext. 2560/2561**