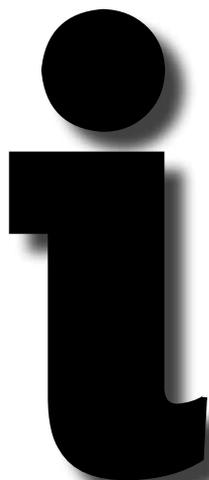




Discharge advice for parents whose baby has had cleft palate surgery (page 1 of 2)



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

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 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 if you would like a reference list.

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. Feeding may take time to get back to normal. The nurse specialists will visit you at home to assess progress
2. Children with a cleft in the palate cannot usually use an ‘any-way-up’ cup, as a large amount of suction is required to obtain fluids so a free flow beaker is preferable.
3. Occasionally, if the cleft has not narrowed enough before surgery, it may be necessary for the surgeon to make 2 cuts (one either side of the cleft, in the roof of the mouth). This is to allow the edges of the cleft palate to be brought together without too much strain on the new wound. If too much strain is put on the stitch line then it could come apart. These cuts heal within 2 weeks but are more uncomfortable for your baby than just having a repair without the extra cuts. These cuts can have packing material in them which is brown/black in colour. The packs generally fall out up to 3 weeks after surgery and baby will either swallow them or spit them out. This should not cause any problems or discomfort.
4. Giving medicine regularly to relieve pain is important. The ward nurses will give you advice about this.
5. A week’s course of antibiotic medicine is given to help prevent any infection.
6. To prevent damage to the wound give a soft diet for 2 weeks. Avoid hard foods such as toast, biscuits, crisps until a month after surgery.
7. 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.
8. To prevent damage to the wound try to keep your baby’s hands from their mouth for 2 weeks after surgery.
9. Stitches in the palate are not removed but are dissolvable. This process may take several weeks before all the stitches have disappeared.

Discharge advice for parents whose baby
has had cleft palate surgery (2 of 2)



10. It is helpful to nurse your baby as upright as possible for the first week after surgery to encourage the swelling to go down.
11. Please note – On discharge from hospital we recommend that an adult sits next to your child in the car. This is so your child 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
Maureen Warren
Sarum Ward

☎ 07717805724
☎ 07717805721
☎ 01722 336262 ext. 2560/2561