



## CLEFT LIP REPAIR

### POST OP INSTRUCTIONS

Most cleft lips are repaired between 3-6 months of age depending on the size of your baby, the type of cleft and the type of pre-surgical treatment recommended. This is usually an outpatient procedure and your child will go home with you after surgery.

1. The Surgeon will talk with you before and after surgery. When your child's vital signs (blood pressure, heart rate and temperature) are stable, you will be called in to the Recovery Room to hold and feed your baby.
2. Discharge will occur once your baby is medically stable, is drinking and has urinated.
3. Restraints ("no-no's") are placed on your child's arms to prevent him or her from bending the arm close enough to touch the tender area with hands or toys. These restraints can be removed under CLOSE supervision for bathing and exercise. They should be kept on for about a week, longer if your child sucks his/her fingers.
4. Pain is managed with Tylenol with Codeine. A prescription will be given for this. After a day or two with Tylenol with Codeine, switch to regular Tylenol. If your child has excessive pain or a temperature of 101 degrees or higher when you return home, please call the office.
5. Nipple feeding is permissible after cleft lip surgery. However, you should not let your baby put anything into the mouth that might cause injury (like a pacifier or fingers) for 2 weeks after surgery. If your child is still taking a nipple, you can use the same nipple and formula as before surgery. A syringe with soft tubing can also be used for fluids. Any hand food should be soft. No utensils or straws should be used.
6. All sutures are absorbable and should not have to be removed. There may be some stitches visible beneath the nose but the skin of the lip will be held together with skin glue. There are many sutures that are beneath the skin that you can not see. Please keep the incision moist with an antibiotic ointment such as Bacitracin. This can be purchased over the counter without a prescription.
7. Swelling does occur and may be worse the second day. It may extend up under the baby's eye and may partially close the baby's nose. Swelling will usually decrease after three to five days but slight swelling remains for a few weeks.
8. If the incision turns red, drains or feels hot to the touch call the office.
9. It is not unusual for babies to be fretful and have sleep and feeding patterns disrupted for several days after surgery.
10. Schedule your post-op appointment for 7-10 days after surgery.
11. The scar often stays red for up to six months. Sometimes the scar may also pull the lip up slightly. The surgeon will tell you when to begin massaging the scar with vitamin E oil to help speed up the healing process and soften the scar. Vitamin E can be purchased over the counter. The capsules can be broken to release the oil.
12. If there are any medical problems please call the office number at any time (832) 325-7234. If you have any other questions contact the Coordinator at 713-500-7302.