

⊕ Waking up

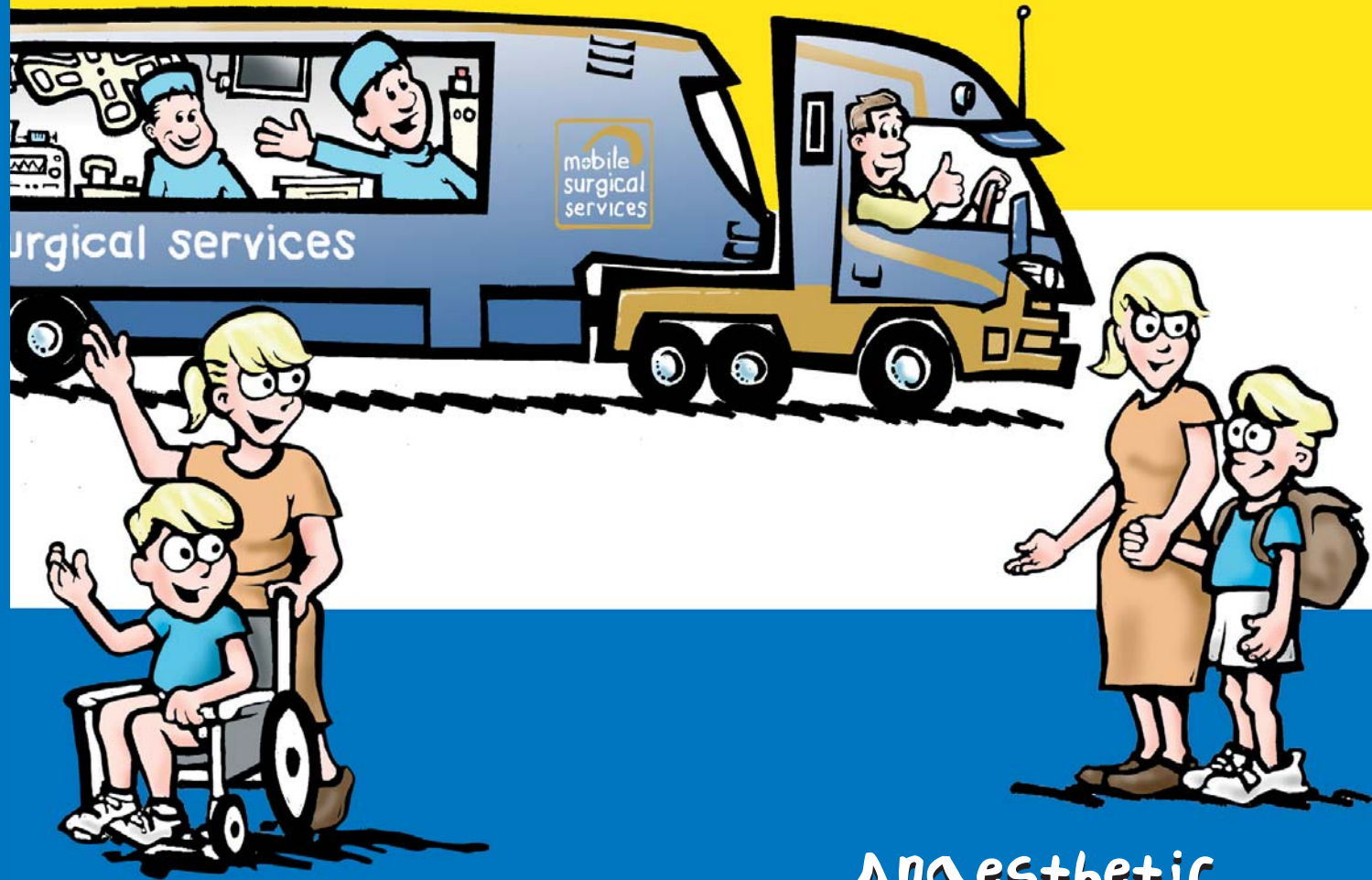


You will be able to see your child as soon as they are awake from the anaesthetic.

Children usually recover from anaesthesia very quickly and without problems. The anaesthetist will endeavour to ensure that your child's recovery is uneventful, and pain free as possible, and that they return to drinking and eating as soon as they feel ready.

Even with adequate pain relief, some children are upset after an operation. Fear, anxiety and hunger all contribute to this distress. Try and stay calm and comfort your child.

You will stay in the recovery area until the nurses looking after your child are confident that they are well enough to be discharged home into your care.



ANAESTHETIC INFORMATION FOR CHILDREN

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⊕ Who is my anaesthetist?



An anaesthetist is an experienced specialist doctor. Their job is to make sure that your child is safe during their operation and comfortable afterwards. You may not see much of the anaesthetist, but they will see a lot of your child. They will stay with your child for the whole of your operation, giving the anaesthetic and constantly checking them.

You will get an opportunity to talk to their anaesthetist and express any anxieties or concerns you may have about your child having an anaesthetic before the operation.

As the anaesthetist is going to be looking after your child it is important to tell them certain things about your family and child. Such as:

- Any history you or your family have of drug allergies or problems with anaesthetics,
- Any illnesses or medical conditions in your family
- Any illnesses, coughs or colds that your child has had recently
- Any medications or inhalers that they are on, and remember to bring these with you!
- Whether they have had any recent inoculations.

Whatever you discuss with the anaesthetist, the surgeon, the anaesthetic technician and the nurses, is treated confidentially. Remember, whatever you tell us will help us appreciate your child's needs and care for them appropriately.

⊕ What can I do to prepare my child for their anaesthetic?

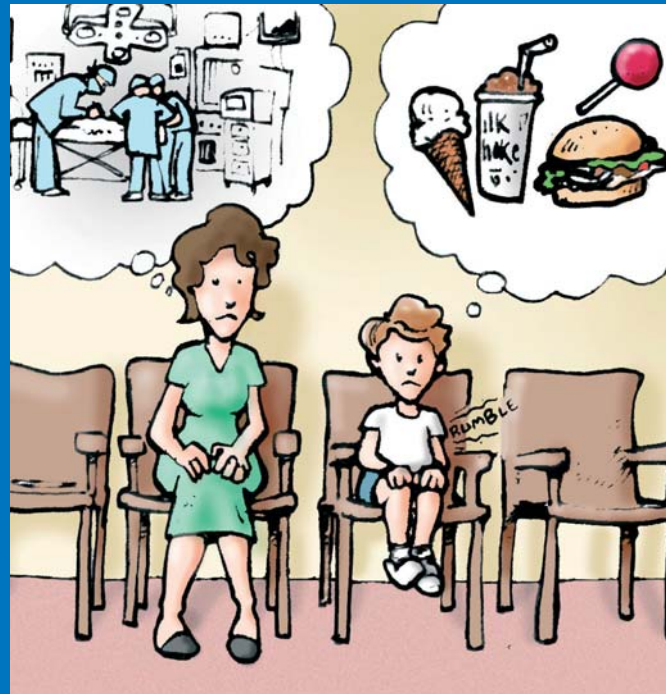
Make sure you follow the guidelines on fasting that will have been sent out to you prior to your child's appointment.

Fasting usually means no solids or milk for six hours before anaesthesia. Generally your child may drink enough clear fluids to satisfy their thirst, such as water, lemonade or apple juice up to two hours before anaesthesia. A "clear fluid" does not include breast milk.

Solids include sweets and chewing gum, if your child gets hungry please do not give them either of these!

If your child's operation is in the afternoon and you are told that they can have breakfast, make sure it is nothing too heavy, have something light such as cereal or toast.

If your child's operation is later on in the afternoon you may be told that they can have a light lunch, if so, again, make sure that it is very light, and not a full cooked meal!



⊕ What will happen?



Once you have had a chat to your anaesthetist and feel comfortable, you will be asked to take your child into the theatre of the bus. We don't get children changed for the bus; they come on in their own clothes, and usually bring with them a favourite toy!

You will notice that there are, what seems, quite a few people in here. These are members of the surgical team who will be caring for your child during the operation. We try and make this experience as enjoyable for children as possible, and encourage parents, and even brothers and sisters to come on to the bus as well, and stay with the child until they go to sleep.

Your child's anaesthetist and the anaesthetic technician will either ask you to have your child on your lap or to get them to lie down on the operating table. Usually a little probe will be put on their finger or their big toe, (which monitors the amount of oxygen in the blood) while a small clear oxygen mask is placed over their face and the anaesthetic administered.

Children go to sleep very quickly, and before you know it, you will be asked to kiss your child and pop back to the waiting area in the hospital, while your child has their surgery.