



Preparing Your Child For Surgery

Key Takeaways:

1. It Starts With You

Process your feelings first. Communicate with medical team to feel as confident and prepared as possible before sharing information with child.

● Assess Understanding

Find out what your child knows about the experience. This allows you to clear up any misconceptions and gives you a good place to start. It is also empowering for kids to share their knowledge with you.

● Language Matters

Prepare child using language that is familiar to them. Keep it simple, honest, and concrete. Try to clarify misunderstandings.

● Prepare and Play

Use play materials and five senses to prepare child and explain what the experience will be like, step by step.

● Create a Coping Plan

Give child a job in the process. Create a coping plan to help them feel safe, supported, and in control during difficult moments. Bringing a stuffed animal or toy from home will also help normalize the environment, or make it feel more familiar.

● Make Time and Space for Questions

Validate big feelings and make time for questions. Check-in with child to let them know you are on their team.

