

The use of soothers or pacifiers should be avoided for 3 weeks after surgery. This will allow your child's palate to repair and heal.

Follow Up Appointments

Your child's operation is one of a number of operations to help their speech and feeding.

It is important that your child continues to be reviewed by the cleft team. This will allow the team to pick up any problems that may develop and to plan further operations. Please ensure that your child attends all their appointments.

If you are unable to attend your child's appointment please contact the Cleft secretary Lorraine McKnight on 01 878 4882 as soon as possible to rearrange your child's appointment.



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Important to Remember

Next Cleft Clinic Appointment

Next Speech and Language Therapy
Appointment

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Cleft Palate Repair

Discharge

Advice for Patients, Parents and Carers

Cleft Team

Main Hospital Number

01 878 4200



Children's Health Ireland
at Temple Street

Going Home

Now your child is going home after their operation (Cleft Palate Repair) you may find this information leaflet helpful.

If you have any urgent concerns about your child when you go home please contact the Plastic Surgery Registrar by ringing our hospital switchboard on 01 8784200.

For routine questions regarding your child's operation please contact the Cleft Nurse Specialist or the Cleft Clinical Coordinator through the hospital switchboard.

Food

After your child's operation they should continue with their specialised bottle.

You can begin using a regular bottle, teat or a regular feeder cup 3 weeks after their operation.

Your child should eat a "pureed diet" (yoghurt consistency) for 2 weeks after surgery. It is important to continue with a well balanced diet avoiding sugary foods which may cause tooth decay. A drink of water or milk should be given following food.



Pain Relief and Antibiotics

Pain relief such as ibuprofen (Nurofen) or paracetamol (Calpol) are suitable to use when you go home. Antibiotics are not routinely given after this type of operation. However, some children may require antibiotics. If your child requires antibiotics it is important that the full course is taken.

Mouth Hygiene

Your child has a wound along their palate with dissolvable stitches. The stitches will dissolve slowly over approximately 3 to 4 weeks.

If the surgeon has used a synthetic plate to close a gap in the hard palate, you may be able to see this when you look into their mouth. This is nothing to be concerned as new skin cells will gradually grow over the area.

Sometimes the surgeon will use a child's fat cells from inside their cheeks to help close a gap in their palate.

During this time it is very important for your child to keep their mouth clean to stop the build up of food debris.

A drink of water after each meal and brushing their teeth correctly twice a day is important. A downward brushing motion is best.

If you are worried that your child's wound has "come apart" please contact a member of the Plastics team within normal working hours 8am - 4pm weekdays. As long as your child is well, it is not an emergency and is usually managed by waiting to see how it settles. Small areas of wounds can break down but usually heal on their own.

If your child becomes unwell at home with a high temperature and is reluctant to eat or drink please contact the Cleft Team by ringing the hospital switchboard.

Activities

Most children get back to their normal routine very soon after their operation and should be allowed to play, attend crèche, school and go outdoors as usual a week or two following surgery.

Your child should not suck their finger or thumb or place objects or toys into their mouth for 3 weeks after surgery.

We recommend the use of hand mittens to stop your child picking at their wound. The mittens should be used at all times for three weeks after the operation, except when you are bathing or feeding your child or when they are playing under the supervision of an adult.