

Care of Your Child After Cleft Lip Repair

Your child recently had surgery on their lip. As your child recovers, take these steps to help them heal.

How do I feed my child after surgery?

- Feed your child as you did before surgery. Use the same bottle and nipple.
- Try to feed your child every three to four hours during the day.
- Your child is drinking enough if they are making about six wet diapers in 24 hours.
- If your child is taking solids, ask your doctor or nurse how to feed your child.

Does my child need medicine after surgery?

- Your child may need medication after surgery. If the doctor prescribes pain medicine or antibiotics, give your child the medicine as instructed.
- Do not use aspirin or ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) after surgery because it may cause bleeding.
- Tell the doctor if your child is taking other medicine, including over-the-counter medicine.

Are there any activity or sleep restrictions after surgery?

- There are no sleep restrictions after surgery. Your child may sleep the same way they usually sleep. Some children do not sleep as well as they did before the surgery. This may last for 1 to 2 weeks after surgery.
- There are no activity restrictions, and your child may do the same things they liked to do before surgery.
- Bathe your child the same way you did before surgery.
- Keep any hard objects away from the child's mouth. Bottles and pacifiers are fine to use.

How do I care for my child's lip after surgery?

- Keep the surgical site clean and dry. If it gets wet, gently wipe the area clean.
- Clean the area 2 to 3 times a day with a mixture of half hydrogen peroxide and half sterile water. You will be provided instructions on how to mix this. Clean any blood or crust from the lip and nose.
- DO NOT put antibiotic ointment or any lotions or creams on the lip. This may break down the special glue called Dermabond that is placed on the incision.

What are nasal stents?

- Nasal stents are plastic tubes that may be placed in your baby's nose. They are held in place with a stitch, and they stay in place for up to six weeks.
- Clean the inside of the tubes with the modified bulb syringe several times a day.

- You can put a small amount of Vaseline around the outside of the tubes. This can help keep the tubes from rubbing the nose and making it red.
- Please use a gentle touch when cleaning or touching the tubes.

When do I call the doctor or nurse?

Call the doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns. Call the doctor or nurse immediately:

- If your child has a fever over 101.5° F (38.6° C)
- If your child is having difficulty breathing
- If your child is not eating
- If your child is throwing up
- If the lip comes apart
- If the surgery site is red and swollen
- If the nasal stents (the plastic tubes) are falling out

Who do I call if I need help?

- Monday through Friday call (323) 361- 4540 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m and leave a message on the clinic nurse line.
- On evenings or weekends call (323) 660- 2450 and ask for the plastic surgeon on call.

Do I need to make any follow-up appointments?

Your child may need several follow-up appointments. Please call and schedule the following appointments as needed:

Clinic/Doctor	When?	Phone Number
Plastic Surgery	Ask for an appointment about 2 weeks after surgery	(323) 361-2154
Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) If your child had ear tubes placed during surgery, they need to be seen by an ENT doctor after surgery.	Ask for an appointment about 4 weeks after surgery	(323) 361-2145