

Parental Presence for Induction of Anaesthesia (PPIA) Parents' Information

Most children undergoing surgical procedures require anaesthesia and induction of anaesthesia describes the initiation of anaesthesia, transiting from conscious to unconscious state. Some children can be anxious and uncooperative during the induction process. Parental presence for induction of anaesthesia (PPIA) hopes to reduce separation anxiety and to make the induction process smoother. Anaesthetists will decide if your child needs parental presence for induction and only one of the parents or guardian may be allowed to accompany the child during induction of anaesthesia. If you are very nervous or upset, it is best not to come into the operating theatre as your anxiety is easily conveyed to the child and makes induction of anaesthesia more difficult. It also happens that parents may also choose not to enter the operating theatre.

In some circumstances you will not be allowed to accompany your child for safety reason. These include children who are:

- Younger than 6 months (separation anxiety normally does not happen)
- Undergoing emergency surgery
- Medically unstable
- Older children who can cope well with temporary separation from family
- Deeply sedated with premedication



Please understand that our primary concern is the child. You will be asked to leave when you are not feeling well and after your child has fallen asleep. It is common for parents to get distressed when their child is anaesthetized and it is natural to get a little teary. Your anaesthetist expects this and will be reassuring. We always take good care of your child.

What will happen before operation?

- Your anaesthetist will assess your child before operation and explain to you if parental presence at induction is beneficial to your child. If PPIA is decided, anaesthetist will further explain to you about the induction process and what you can

do to help.

- On the day of operation, a nurse will meet you and your child at the operating theatre reception. A nurse will accompany you throughout the process. Please do not wander off without a nurse for your safety.
- Before entering the theatre, you will need to:
 - Wear a special attire (gown, cap, shoes cover, mask)
 - Switch off electronic communication devices

What will happen during induction?

- Children will breathe through a mask which delivers oxygen and anaesthetic gas which will make them sleepy. Before children are completely anaesthetized, they might go through a phase of excitation; rolling eyes, moving around, arching backs are commonly observed during this phase. Please be reassured that these are all completely normal and common during induction. It usually takes 1-2 minutes for children to fall asleep with a mask.
- When being put to sleep with a mask, children may try to take the mask off or cry. They might complain about the smell or breathing difficulty. These are all normal responses of children going off to sleep with a mask. Occasionally, children need to be briefly restrained while they are going to sleep.
- Children can also go off to sleep with intravenous medications. An intravenous cannula is needed to be placed before going to sleep. It is normal that children may struggle and cry during the procedure. Occasionally, they need to be briefly restrained for the success of the cannulation. Once the cannula is secured and intravenous medication is given, children fall asleep rapidly.
- When asleep, children become floppy and unresponsive. Once your child is asleep, nurse will show you out and we will take good care of your child.



How to comfort your child during induction?

- Children are easily affected by parents' emotion, so you need to stay calm and collected. Be encouraging to your child throughout the process.
- Bring along toys or dummies to comfort and distract your child during induction.

- You can hold your child in your arms or hold his/her hand during induction. You can talk or even sing to your child, so that he/she know you are here.

Important things to remember

- Do not feel bad if you cannot accompany your child at induction.
- If you would like to leave or feel uncomfortable at any time, please let medical staff know.
- Safety of your child is our top priority, so you must follow the instruction of medical staff in all circumstances. You might be asked to leave the room for any reason during induction so that your child can have the full attention of the medical team.
- Hospital can be a stressful place for children. They might still get upset and stressed even with your help at induction. Do not feel bad because you have already been very helpful to the medical team.