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## Post-anesthesia Care Unit/Recovery Room

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### Understanding the PACU

Welcome to the Post-anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) at Children's Hospital of Greenville Health System (GHS)! This unit also is known as the Recovery Room. We hope this sheet answers common questions you may have about this unit.

### Where can I wait while my child is in surgery?

Once your child goes into surgery, someone will escort you to the waiting area. Please check in with the receptionist when you get to the waiting area. That person will help keep you updated on your child's progress during surgery.

If your child is having **outpatient surgery** and will be going home today, please wait in the outpatient waiting room near the front of the hospital. Your nurse will give you directions.

If your child is **staying overnight**, you will wait in the lobby area off the atrium elevators on the second floor (the same set of elevators you took to the pre-op area).

### When can I see my child?

As soon as your child's surgery is complete, the doctor will speak to you in the waiting room. During this time, Operating Room staff will be waking your child and delivering him or her to the PACU. They will assess and closely monitor your child while in the PACU.

Please know that there may be a time delay between the doctor's visit with you and your arrival in the PACU.

You will be notified of your child's arrival in the PACU, and the waiting room receptionist will bring you to your child's bedside at this time.

### What should I expect when my child wakes up from anesthesia?

Each child reacts differently to anesthesia. Some children wake up quickly while others wake up slowly. Often, children feel disoriented or confused. They may cry, scream or be restless. This is a **normal** reaction.

Your child may have his or her eyes open but not be completely awake. This, too, is normal as the anesthesia wears off.

Speak to your child in a soft, calm voice, knowing that your child may not respond to you immediately. Be careful not to shout or speak loudly, which can overwhelm your child.

As your child wakes up from anesthesia, he or she will become more alert and relaxed. If your child is experiencing pain, the nurse will assess the pain level and provide pain medication as needed.

### What can I do to help my child?

- Speak in a soft, calm voice
- Provide re-assurance and remind your child that you are by his or her side
- Offer a gentle, soothing touch
- Provide a comfort item, such as a pacifier, toy or blanket

### How long will my child stay in the PACU?

The length of time spent in the PACU depends on your child and type of surgery. Some children are awake and ready to go home in 30 minutes while others may take a few hours.

PACU staff will assess your child to determine when he or she is safely ready to move to a patient room or be discharged home.

### Who can visit my child in the PACU?

Because of limited space and the need to maintain privacy and confidentiality, only two parents or guardians are allowed in the PACU. Other family members may stay in the waiting area until your child is discharged home or brought to a patient room.

*The staff members at GHS Children's Hospital want to provide your child with safe, excellent care. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's care, please talk to your child's nurse or child life specialist.*

Outpatient PACU: (864) 455-8899

Inpatient PACU: (864) 455-7129

Child Life: (864) 455-7846

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