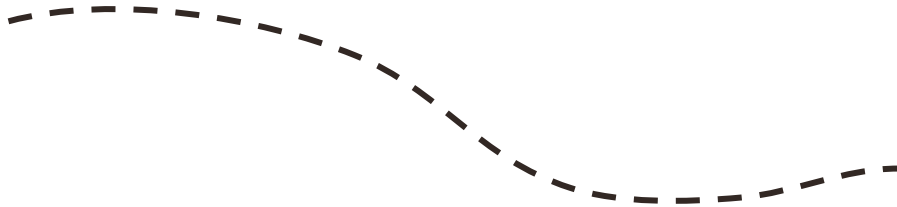




USEFUL TIPS FOR PARENTS AND FAMILY:

- ✓ Allow yourself to **preserve positive memories** in a practical way by recording them with **photographs, writing them down...** Why not make a baby book? Why not make a photo album? Why not make a diary? You can ask a nurse for help!
- ✓ **All the little achievements should be celebrated.** Share them with your family in a photo, a call, or video call;
- ✓ Take advantage of the moments when your child is resting, to rest too;
- ✓ Accept/ask your family and/or friends for help with daily activities (cleaning, meals, etc.);
- ✓ **Seek support** from your **family and friends and/or other parents/families** who also care for a child with heart disease.



USEFUL CONTACTS:

Pediatrics ward: +351210433121 (122)

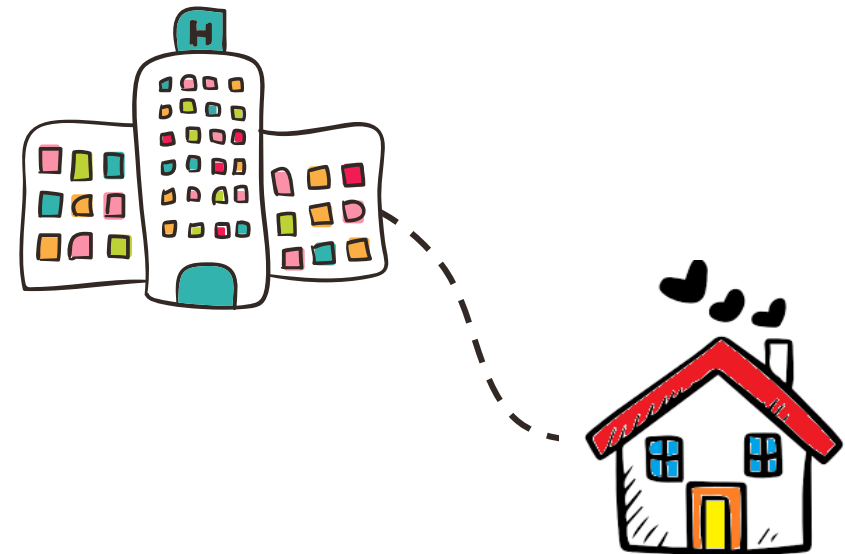
Social services: +351210433118

Secretary: +351210433389

Pediatric cardiologist appointments: +351210433178

Post-Cardiac Surgery Care

Guidance for child's discharge





WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE RETURNING HOME:

Food and physical activity

- Signs of tiredness and other warning signs
- Precautions during playtime
- Precautions with food

Safety

- Warning signs
- Precautions with sun exposure
- Precautions with visitors
- Knowing the importance of toothbrushing for the operated child

Medication

- Precautions with medication
- Know how to prepare and give medication to the child
- Know the possible side effects of medication

Surgical wound

- Know how to care the surgical wound
- Precautions during bath time
- Know the warning signs that the wound may show

Nurses will talk to you about everything throughout the hospitalization and all questions should be discussed, as many times as you like.

NOTES AND QUESTIONS:



VACCINES:

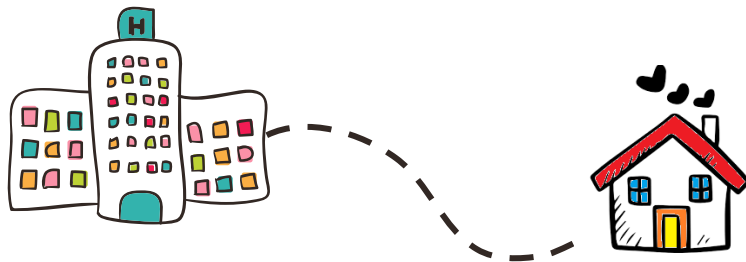
- ✓ You should keep your child's National Vaccination Plan updated. Unless otherwise indicated, the child can be vaccinated six weeks after surgery.
- ✓ Vaccination against Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV - main responsible for respiratory infections in the first two years of life) is up between October and February. Prevention is recommended for most children up to 24 months with congenital heart disease.



WARNING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:

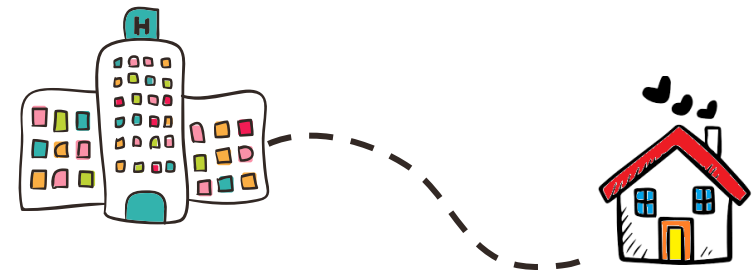
If your child presents any of the signs or symptoms described below, or if there is something that worries you, **you should call the pediatric cardiology service**, where we will give you directions on how to proceed.

- ✓ Fatigue;
- ✓ Shortness of breath or breathing difficulty;
- ✓ Appearance or worsening of cyanosis (bluish coloration of the skin), mainly on the lips and fingernails;
- ✓ Sensation of palpitations
- ✓ Edemas (swelling)
- ✓ Nausea, or persistent vomiting
- ✓ Fever (temperature above 37.5°C)
- ✓ Appearance of increased redness, pus or swelling of the surgical wound



PRECAUTIONS WITH THE SURGICAL WOUND: (maintain for 1 month)

- ✓ Keep the **wound clean and dry** (when it gets wet, it facilitates the growth of microorganisms and the development of an infection).
- ✓ You **should not touch the wound with your hands**, as these are carriers of numerous microorganisms.
- ✓ In the bath, you can wet the wound with water and soap/ shampoo but **do not direct the shower water on it**, and you should dry it well without rubbing. If you use the bathtub for bathing, **do not submerge the surgical wound in water**: choose to put less water or, if the child is older, sit him/her with water up to the waist.
- ✓ **Do not put cream or disinfectant** on the wound.
- ✓ The healing process causes itching. Always keep the **wound protected with clothes** to prevent the child from touching it. Always keep the child's nails short and clean.
- ✓ Use a bib to prevent the wound from getting dirty/soaked by food.
- ✓ **Observe the wound daily** for signs of infection, such as: pain, redness, warmth, swelling or the presence of any fluid.
- ✓ Protect the scar from the sun for 1 year.
- ✓ At the time of discharge, if you still have staples or stitches, you will be given a document with information regarding their removal.





MEDICATION:

- ✓ As soon as possible, you will be given a sheet with the medication scheme (schedule, dose, and mode of preparation) and you will have the opportunity to practice in the presence of a nurse.
- ✓ Remember that if your child regurgitates, spits up, or vomits the medication, **DO NOT attempt to give it again** (either a partial or full dose) unless requested by the doctor.
- ✓ Before medication runs out or expires, **check its prescriptions and availability in pharmacies in advance.**
- ✓ If your child is on anticoagulant therapy, it is essential to follow it strictly, and to monitor your INR through blood tests. In this case you should check for signs of bleeding: nose or gums bleeding, blood in the urine, or even bruises. If the child is going to have a surgery or invasive treatment or exam, you should talk to his/her doctor, as you may be advised to stop this medication.



SAFETY:

- ✓ The child can go outside, but it is essential to **avoid enclosed places with crowds and the hottest hours.**
- ✓ You can receive visitors at home, as long as they are not sick. **Everyone should wash their hands** before coming into contact with the child.
- ✓ **Proper toothbrushing and frequent visits to the dentist** should be maintained, as the presence of tooth decay is a risk factor for endocarditis (heart infection).
- ✓ **Post-operative surveillance appointments** should be kept, as well as regular child health appointments with the pediatrician/at the Health Center.



FOOD:

- ✓ Age-appropriate and rich in fruits, vegetables, cereals, and fats of vegetable origin, **avoiding fats of animal origin, sugary and salty foods.**
- ✓ **New foods may be introduced as normal**, unless otherwise indicated by a doctor.
- ✓ **Avoid excess weight**, as it is associated with increased cardiac effort and a greater tendency toward hypertension.



BEHAVIOR:

- ✓ During hospitalization and upon returning home, **there may be changes in the usual child's behavior** which may persist for about 1 month: demanding more attention, becoming quieter or more irritable, or regressing to earlier stages of development.
- ✓ The **maintenance of daily habits and routines** prior to surgery is essential.



PLAYING TIME:

- ✓ The level of physical activity should be gradually resumed depending on the **child's tolerance and his/ her medical condition** or illness.
- ✓ The child should be allowed to play, for the benefit of her/his development. **Activities such as learning to walk or learning to stand should be monitored** during the 1-month period after surgery to prevent the child from falling and hitting his chest.
- ✓ Activities that involve a risk of falling or hitting the surgical wound, and **riding a tricycle or similar, cannot be done** for 1 month after surgery.