



NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.

Helping Hand™

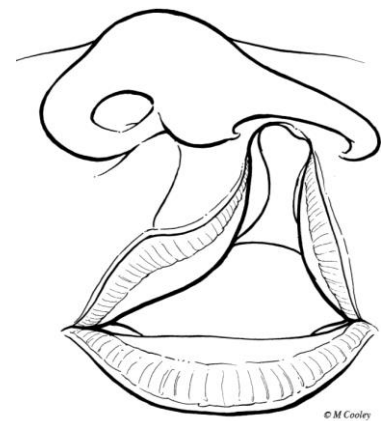
Health Education for Patients and Families

Cleft Lip Repair

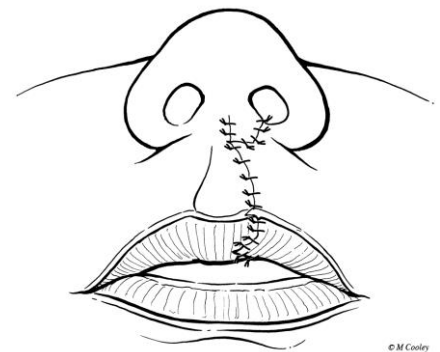
Your baby's cleft lip (Picture 1) has been repaired (Picture 2). There are a few things to know about their care at home. Other than these special instructions, take care of your baby like any other baby of the same age.

Care of the Incision

- The incision (cut) site will have a little redness and swelling for about 2 weeks. Surgical glue is applied over the incision. It will begin to look like a scab. It should fall off in about 2 weeks. Try not to get it wet.
- You might see blood clots in the nostrils. Do not remove them for 2 weeks. You may accidentally pull out the stitches if you try to remove the clots.
- The stitches will dissolve while the incision is healing.
- You do not need to apply an antibiotic ointment or other cream. These can cause problems with the surgical glue.
- 3 to 4 weeks after surgery, your child's doctor may recommend daily massage of the lip scar with vitamin E oil. This helps to soften and flatten the scar.



Picture 1 Cleft lip



Picture 2 Cleft lip repair

Feeding

- Your baby should be able to drink and eat the same as before the surgery.
- The upper lip may be sore for a few days, and your baby may be fussy at feeding time. It may help to give the prescribed pain medicine about 1 hour before feeding.
- Your child may use a pacifier or soft-spout sippy cup after the surgery.
- After each feeding, give your baby 1/2 ounce of water to rinse their mouth.

Sleeping

While the incision is healing, your baby should sleep on their back to prevent rubbing the upper lip on the bed.

Arm Splints

Arm splints are used to keep your baby from accidentally hurting their lip. Your surgeon may recommend that you use them until your baby's checkup 3 weeks after surgery. Be sure you know how to put the splints on before you go home. The nurse can show you how.

Pain

Some pain is normal after going home. Follow the doctor's advice for giving pain medicine.

Medicine Safety Tips

The doctor will order pain medicine to use at home.

- Read the label each time before you give your child medicine.
- Give the exact amount of medicine as ordered by your doctor.
- If the medicine is a liquid, use a pediatric measuring device (available at the pharmacy) to measure the exact dose. **Never measure liquid medicines with a kitchen spoon.**
- Stay with your child until they have swallowed the dose of medicine.
- Store all medicines out of the reach of children and pets.

When to Call the Doctor

Call your child's doctor, health care provider, or the Cleft Lip and Palate Center's helpline if your child has:

- Fever over 101° Fahrenheit (F) or 38.3° Celsius (C) when taken rectally, axillary (under the arm), or in the ear.
- Increased redness or swelling (or both) along the incision.
- Yellow or white bumps (pimples) along the incision.
- New openings or gaps in the incision.
- Bleeding or injury to the incision.
- Pain that doesn't go away when you give pain medicine.
- Trouble drinking or eating.
- A dry diaper for 8 hours or more.

If your child has taken too much medicine or the wrong medicine, first call the Central Ohio Poison Center at (800) 222-1222, TTY (866) 688-0088. They will tell you what to do.

The Cleft Lip and Palate Center Helpline

Call (614) 722-6299 during regular business hours from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday. After hours, on weekends or holidays, call (614) 722-2000. Ask to speak with the plastic surgeon on-call.

Follow-up Appointment

Your child will return to the Cleft Lip and Palate Center 2 to 3 weeks after surgery. For follow-up appointments at the Cleft Lip and Palate Center, call (614) 722-6537.

If you have any questions, be sure to call your doctor or the Hospital Operator at (614) 722-2000 and ask for the surgeon on-call.

Team Care Post-op

The Cleft Lip and Palate Center at Nationwide Children's Hospital cares for patients with cleft lip and/or palate and related craniofacial conditions. We believe team care is the best care. Our team includes:

- Nurses
- Dentists
- Geneticists
- Social workers
- Orthodontists
- Audiologists
- Psychologists
- Plastic surgeons
- Feeding specialists
- Nurse practitioners
- Otolaryngologists
- Speech-language pathologists

This team works closely to make a personal care plan for your child that works as they grow. We believe that starting team care early is the best way to support your child's development.

You can expect your child's first team visit to start at about 15 to 18 months of age. Please call (614) 722-6537 or send us a message on MyChart[®] to schedule your child's first team visit.