

Parental Tips:

Preparing for Your Teenager's Surgery

Common worries and concerns for teenagers

- Loss of privacy and independence
- Anesthesia and waking up during surgery
- Body image and change in appearance
- Missing social activities with friends (e.g., school, activities, sports)

Ways to support your teen

- **Be open and honest:** Teens want to know what will be happening to them and how it will affect their bodies. Provide information about the procedure, equipment, length of recovery time, and possibility of pain or soreness. Deter your teen from looking at websites for information about surgery.
- **Involvement is important:** Keep your teen a part of the conversation regarding his/her surgery and care plan. Teenagers can become angry and upset if they feel left out. Reassure your teenager that his/her opinions are being heard.
- **Encourage conversation:** Your teenager may be reluctant to talk with you about the upcoming surgery. Continue to encourage and provide opportunities for him/her to ask questions and express concerns about surgery. Your teen may need assistance from you or hospital staff about how to talk to friends about his/her illness or upcoming surgery.
- **Provide privacy:** When possible, give your teenager privacy during the hospital stay. For example, stepping out of the room when changing into the hospital gown.

If your teenager is anxious about the upcoming surgery, you can visit our website for additional support and videos to help prepare your teen for surgery (www.boystownhospital.org/patientServices/Pages/Child-Life.aspx). You can contact the Child Life Department for additional support at 531-355-6040.