

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

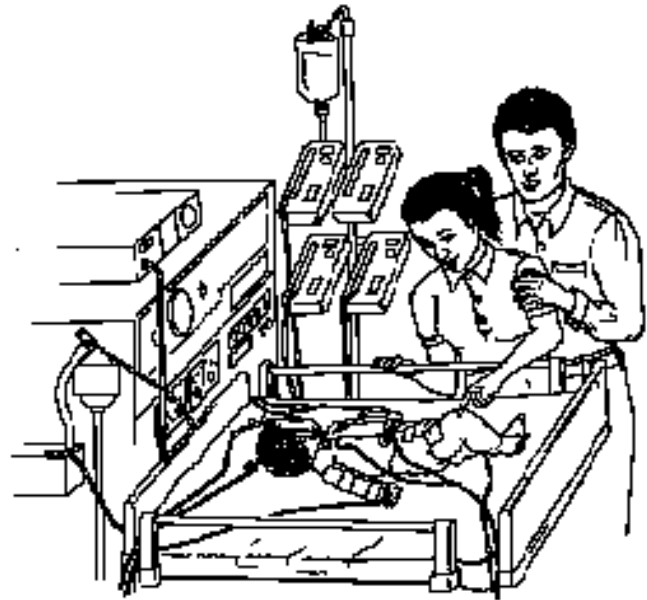
# After Heart Surgery in the Hospital

After heart surgery, your child will be moved to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU). There, nurses and doctors will watch your child carefully.

If you have any questions while your child is recovering from surgery, ask the nurses and doctors.

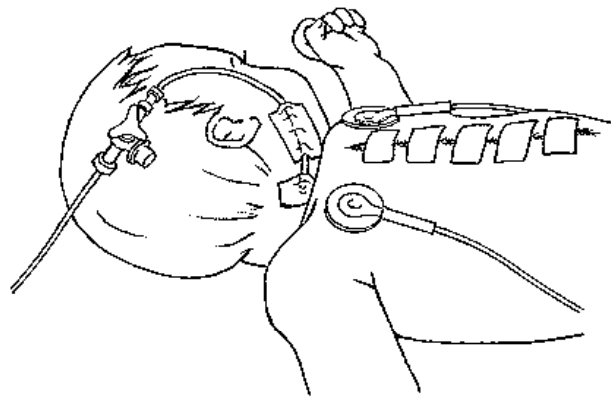
To best care for your child, we limit visitors to two at a time. During some examinations and procedures, visitor may be asked to leave the child's bedside. There is a lounge for parents just outside the PICU. When you leave the hospital, give your child's nurse your telephone number, so she or he can call you, if needed.

The health care team works together to help your child recover from surgery. There can be times when they are very busy giving medicines, and working with tubes and wires after heart surgery. This is normal.



**If you have any questions while  
your child is recovering from surgery,  
ask the nurses and doctors.**

- Your child will get medicine for comfort. Your touch and loving words will also help your child feel safe and calm.
- Your child may be on a breathing machine (**ventilator or respirator**). A tube goes in your child's mouth or nose. While your child is on the breathing machine, he or she will be given medicine to stay calm (**sedation**). When your child can breathe well on his or her own, the breathing tube will be taken out.
- If needed, your child will be given oxygen. If your child has extra mucus, a nurse may use a **suction catheter** to remove it.
- Your child will be attached to several machines with tubes and wires. These machines help the doctors and nurses tell how your child is doing. Your child may have one or two of each of these tubes and wires for several days:
  - a tube in a vein to give fluids and medicine (**IV or intravenous line**)
  - a tube in an artery to measure blood pressure and draw blood (**arterial line**)
  - a tube in the chest to drain air, blood, and fluid (**chest tube**)
  - a tube through the nose into in the stomach, to empty the stomach and give medicine or feedings (**NG or nasogastric tube**)
  - a tube in the bladder to drain and measure the urine (**Foley catheter**).
  - **pacemaker wires** in the chest, to keep his or her heartbeat and rhythm regular
  - wires on patchstaped to the skin, to measure the heartbeat and rhythm (**EKG or electrocardiogram**)
  - a lit wire attached to a wrapped finger or toe, to measure the percentage of oxygen in the blood (**oximeter**)



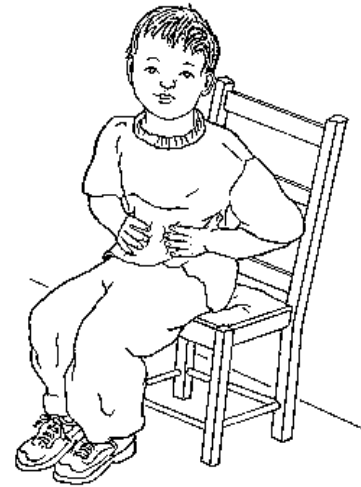
**Your child will be attached to several machines with tubes and wires.**

These tubes and wires will be taken off when they are no longer needed. Your child will stay in the PICU until he or she does not need to be watched so closely,

24 hours a day. This could be one day, a few days, or longer. When your child is better, he or she will be moved to another part of the hospital, until he or she is ready to go home.

## Children get better faster when they take deep breaths

After surgery, people often avoid pain by taking small breaths. This stops their lungs from filling with air, and the lungs can collapse, like a balloon without air in it. Deep breaths open the lungs. Nurses and respiratory therapists will help keep your child's lungs clear with CPT, or chest physical therapy. They will ask your child to take deep breaths to bring lots of air into the lungs. Babies take deep breaths when they cry.



**Taking deep breaths will bring lots of air into the lungs.**

Another way to take deep breaths is to move. As your baby gets better, you can move and hold him or her. As your child gets better, he or she needs to get out of bed and walk.

### Now that you've read this:

- Tell your nurse or doctor what you will do to help your child feel safe and comfortable after surgery. (Check when done.)

If you want to know more about what happens after surgery,  
ask your nurse or doctor.

Other handouts your nurse or doctor may give you are:

- Pediatric Intensive Care Unit or PICU (47)
- Going Home After Surgery (508)



If you have any questions or concerns,  
 call your child's doctor or  call \_\_\_\_\_

If you want to know more about child health and illness,  
visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children's Hospital  
1919 East Thomas Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85016  
602-546-1400  
[www.phoenixchildrenshospital.com](http://www.phoenixchildrenshospital.com)

**Disclaimer**

The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children's Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.

Thursday, November 9, 2006 • DRAFT in family review  
#261 • Written by Heather Bennett, RN • Illustrated by Dennis Swain



# The Emily Center

## After Heart Surgery in the Hospital

Procedure/Treatment/Home Care  
Si usted desea esta información en español,  
por favor pídasela a su enfermero o doctor.

Name of Health Care Provider: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: 261  
For office use: Date returned: \_\_\_\_\_  db  nb

## Family Review of Handout

**Health care providers:** Please teach families with this handout.

**Families:** Please let us know what you think of this handout.

Would you say this handout is hard to read?  Yes  No

easy to read?  Yes  No

Please circle the parts of the handout that were hard to understand.

Would you say this handout is interesting to read?  Yes  No

Why or why not?

Would you do anything differently after reading  
this handout?  Yes  No

If yes, what?

After reading this handout, do you have any  
questions about the subject?  Yes  No

If yes, what?

Is there anything you don't like about the drawings?

Yes  No

If yes, what?

What changes would you make in this handout to make it better or easier to understand?

Please return your review of this handout to your nurse or doctor or send it to the address below.

Fran London, MS, RN  
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1919 East Thomas Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85016-7710

602-546-1395

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**Thank you for helping us!**