

Questions parents often ask when their child is going to hospital



Helping sick children and young people meet their healthcare needs,
in partnership with parents, carers and professionals

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How can I prepare my child for going to hospital?

You should get information about the hospital ward with your appointment letter. Don't be afraid to phone them and ask any questions you have. You can read the Action for Sick Children booklet on 'What to expect when your child goes into hospital'.

Will I be able to stay with my child?

Yes, you can be with your child at all times unless there is a reason that has been explained to you and agreed with your child – ask if you are unsure and keep asking till you have an answer. The hospital should also be able to provide parent accommodation.

Can my child have his/her own clothes and toys?

Apart from time in the operating theatre most children can wear their own day or night clothes in hospital if they wish. Toys have to be suitable for disinfection and are often lost. If your child has a special toy or comforter, for example a teddy bear, let the nurses know and try to take care of it yourself so that it is not lost. You can ask your nurse to admit the special toy with its own hospital bracelet – this will help everyone to know who the toy belongs to.

How can I help if my child is in pain?

Explain to your child if something might hurt but reassure them that there are ways to keep control of pain. Talk to your nurse about how to help your child to relax and how to get the best effect from pain relief medicines. You can read the Action for Sick Children booklet 'Helping Children Cope with Pain'.

My child is frightened of needles – how can I help?

Be honest if there is a need for blood tests or injections. The Action for Sick Children booklet on 'Helping Children Cope with Needles' is useful in helping a child to understand what is happening and how to cope.

Can I go with my child to the operating theatre?

It should be possible to stay with your child in the anaesthetic room. Ask when you arrive at hospital.

What if I don't understand the Doctor?

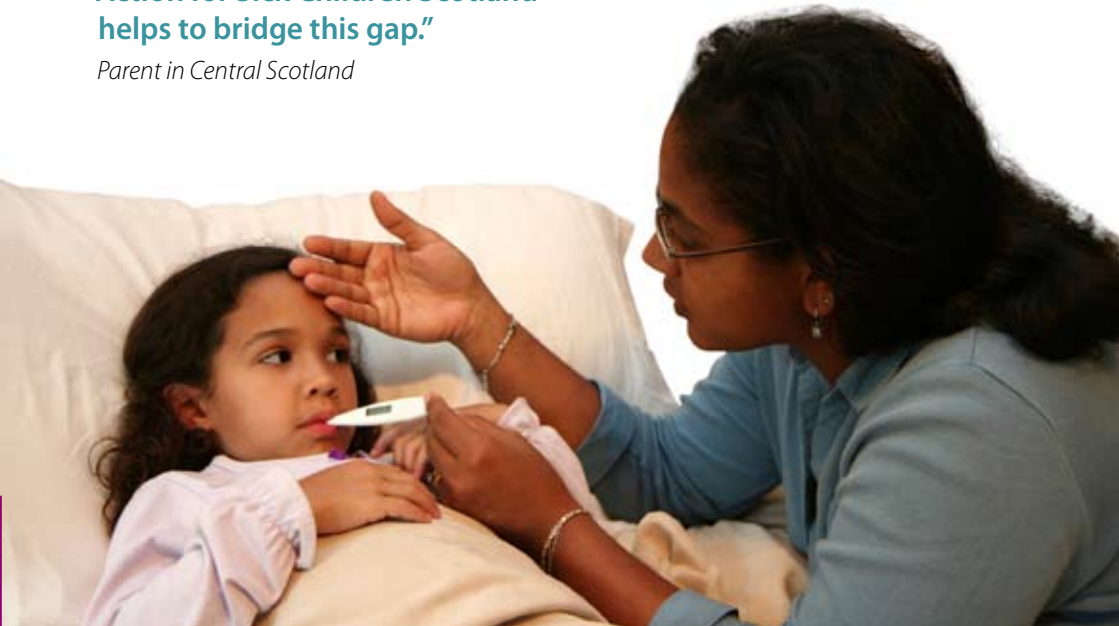
Don't be afraid to ask them to repeat the answer. If English is not your first language an interpreter can be arranged if needed and you can let the hospital know when you get an appointment.

What can I do if I am unhappy about my child's care in hospital?

Talk to your child's nurse as this usually helps deal with any problems promptly. If this does not help ask to speak to the nurse in charge who will either help you herself or contact the people you need to talk to. If you are not satisfied you can take your concern through the hospital's complaints procedure. For further information: www.show.scot.nhs.uk/healthrights.

“Going into hospital is a very frightening experience for a 5 year old, he feels powerless and although as a parent you can try and explain what's going to happen there is still a gap to bridge. Personally I feel Action for Sick Children Scotland helps to bridge this gap.”

Parent in Central Scotland



Action for Sick Children (Scotland) is the only charity in Scotland dedicated to informing, promoting, and campaigning on behalf of the needs of ALL sick children and young people within our healthcare system. Our work includes:

- Working with others to ensure that health services are planned for sick children and young people in child-centred environments with appropriate ratios of trained staff.
- Informing young people, parents and carers of their rights and responsibilities; empowering them to participate in decisions about treatment and care.
- Raising awareness and representing children's needs and concerns within government, healthcare committees and other non-governmental organisations.
- Promoting high quality of health care services at home and in hospital, while working to obtain equality of services and access across Scotland.

To read the booklets mentioned in this leaflet and for a full list of publications please go to the Action for Sick Children Scotland website – **www.ascscotland.org.uk**

For all other information please contact:



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