

# When Baby Needs Surgery

Narrator

There is a chance that your baby will require surgery. Now some surgeries are minor in nature and some are for more major conditions such as correcting birth defects. It's never easy to hear that your baby needs surgery.

Sue Hall, MD, Neonatologist

When a parent hears "surgery", they're normally going to be quite frightened. But what they need to understand is that the team of people taking care of their baby will be highly skilled in taking care of babies.

Daniel Deguatre, MD

Most centers that perform surgery in premature infants and newborns are well equipped with specialists, surgical specialists, anesthesia specialists and OR specialists, nurses in the operating room who feel very comfortable with taking care of infants as small as a pound in weight.

Narrator

Babies who are possible candidates for surgery will undergo pre-operative tests to confirm the diagnosis before surgery. Parents whose baby will undergo surgery need to be aware of the specific risks and benefits of the procedure.

Mitchell Goldstein, MD

Often times it's about calming the parents and explaining that there are risks and there are benefits to the idea of doing surgery, to have the surgeon address and basically relieve any of the fears or concerns they have.

Sue Hall, MD, Neonatologist

There have been tremendous advances in pediatric and neonatal surgery over the last number of years. And the outcome for these surgeries in general is good.

Narrator

There are some hospitals that are specially equipped to perform surgery and that might mean your baby will be transferred from one hospital to another.

Lashinique Parker, Mother

They're transporting her back to RCRMC in this little incubator right here. They're just waiting for the nurses and doctors to get ready.

Sue Hall, MD, Neonatologist

While a baby may be admitted to one NICU after birth and then require surgery. And if they are at a community hospital that doesn't have a pediatric surgeon, they may need to be transferred to a facility that does.

Lashinique Parker, Mother

When I found out my baby had a heart condition I was just so terrified. And she had to get transported to Loma Linda. But I'm so glad she came, and she overcame it, one big obstacle.

Narrator

One of the more common surgeries is to fix heart conditions.

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Mark Slansky, MD

As a pediatric cardiologist, I recognize it's a very scary thing when a parent learns that their child has a heart defect of any kind. Having said that, PDA or patent ductus arteriosus is one of the most common and, the surgery for PDA is very, very straightforward with a very, very low complication rate.

Parents

Our baby has congenital heart defects. So she's had heart surgery.

When she went into surgery, it's very, very tough. It is, it pulls on your heartstrings.

Narrator

Pain management for your newborn will be something your doctors will pay special attention to.

Daniel Deguatre, MD

Amazingly, newborns usually recover from surgery better than adults would. They seem to have less pain. They're pretty much lying down not doing too much. And the incisions we use tend to be a little bit smaller. So in general, the newborns actually tolerate the procedures much better than adults do.

Narrator

Surgery on a newborn is never easy, but rest assured, the NICU staff is doing everything possible to help you with your baby during the recovery time.

Lashinique Parker, Mother

Just ask the nurses all the questions you have. Try to get a support team, family, friends. If you need to cry, just cry, just let it out. You still have to be strong for your child of course.

The outcome was wonderful. She's still fighting on. She's actually breathing much better than she was before.