





Sometimes you might feel worried about coming into hospital. Maybe you haven't been to hospital before and you don't know what it will be like. Maybe you

think you're going to miss home and your friends.
Going into hospital can bring up lots of questions and feelings.

It's important to talk about these questions and feelings as this can help you not to worry. This toolkit is designed to help you get a better understanding of what hospital will be like. There are also some top tips to help ease your worries about hospital.



It's a good idea to get clued up about hospital, so that you know what to expect when you come in. If you know what to expect, there is less to worry about.

#### Why am I going to hospital?

Children come into hospital for lots of different reasons. Some may have had an accident, so need to go to A&E, others might have a long term condition, so need to come in regularly for check-ups, scans or treatments, and some might be coming in for an operation or special medical treatment.

## What's going to happen when I go to hospital?

It's good to understand what's going to happen when you come into hospital, so that you know what to expect and don't have to guess. Find out what the appointment, procedure or treatment is going to be about. Ask how long you'll be there for; is it a couple of hours for the appointment or might you be spending a couple of weeks on the ward? The hospital staff are here to look after you, so you will be in good hands.

#### What can I do in hospital?

There's lots of fun stuff to do in hospitals, not just procedures and medical check-ups! On each ward there is a play/activity room where you can get involved in lots of fun activities. There's also an art programme which provides musicians, drama and craft sessions. There are even hospital teachers so you can carry on learning even when in hospital.

# TOP TIPS AND STRATEGIES

### Write down your questions and feelings

You might have a lot of questions about your hospital visit. Keep a notebook and write down questions when they come to mind; you can either ask a parent or phone up the hospital to get your questions answered.

Sometimes going into hospital can bring up lots of different feelings. Sometimes these feelings can be hard to understand. Some people like to keep a journal of how they're feeling. You might like to discuss these feelings with a parent, close friend or teacher at school. Sharing your worries about hospital can often help you feel a lot better about coming in.

#### Make a list of things to pack

If you're staying overnight or for a number of nights, you'll need to pack a bag. Remember your day clothes, pyjamas, toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush, slippers, outdoor shoes and trainers. If you have a favourite item, like a blanket or teddy bear then don't forget to put them in too. Bringing your favourite things with you will help make hospital feel more homely.

teddy pyjamas tooothbrush





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## Think of things you'd like to do in hospital

You can bring things from home that you would like to do to when in hospital. If you have a favourite book, portable video game, magazine, puzzle or DVD, pack it with you, so you have some fun things to do when in hospital.







# WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE?

You can ask to see a member of the play team – their main base is on level 5 in the play centre but they also have additional bases on each ward. More information about the hospital play team can be found here:

http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/your-hospitals/bristol-royal-hospital-for-children/library/

Some services have specific psychology support that you can access during your stay. Ask a member of the team caring for you who will be able to advise whether this is available. More details can be found here:

http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/support-for-patients/psychological-health-services/

This website provides lots of useful information about what it is like to go into hospital:

http://media.chop.edu/data/files/kidshealthgalaxy/index.html

For younger children, these resources from CBEEBIES may be helpful:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/radio/hospital-heroes-sheffield



These toolkits have been written by NHS clinical psychologists and neuropsychologists working for University Hospitals Bristol. They have been codesigned with service users and healthcare staff. These toolkits are only intended to provide general advice and information. Please discuss your individual needs with your doctor or specialist nurse. If you would like more information about psychology services please go to:

http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/support-for-patients/psychological-health-services/

We would like to thank patients and other healthcare staff for their contributions to this toolkit.

For access to other patient toolkits please go to the following address:

http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/ support-for-patients/psychological-health-services/ resources/

For this leaflet in large print, audio or PDF format, please email **patientleaflets@uhbristol.nhs.uk** 

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