

Meatal Stenosis

Care After Surgery

This handout explains how to care for your child after a surgery to repair meatal stenosis. It discusses symptoms, diagnosis, what surgery is like, bathing and diet at home, and when to call if there are problems.

What is meatal stenosis?

- The opening in a penis where the pee (urine) comes out is called the urethral meatus (mee-AY-tus).
 - Sometimes the opening can be too small or narrow. This is called meatal stenosis (mee-ATE-ul steh-NO-sis).
 - Pee will not come out in a direct stream.
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What are the symptoms of meatal stenosis?

- A normal urine stream goes straight out of the urethral meatus and then falls downwards.
 - You may notice that your child's stream is more powerful, can go farther and may have a wide spray. Their urine stream could point in a different direction, often angled upwards, like when you put your thumb over a hose with water coming out.
 - Your child may feel they need to pee right away (urgency) or pee more frequently.
 - In some cases, you might see blood spotting in their diaper or underwear.
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What causes meatal stenosis?

- This narrowing can occur when the area becomes irritated and causes scar tissue.
 - The irritation can come from rubbing against a diaper, injury to the penis, having very tight foreskin for a long time, or having a catheter in place for a long time.
 - The best way to prevent meatal stenosis after a circumcision is to use lots of petroleum jelly (Vaseline), as directed after the procedure.
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How is meatal stenosis treated?

- The treatment for meatal stenosis is a simple procedure to widen the opening. This procedure is called either a meatotomy (mee-uh-TOT-eh-me) or a meatoplasty (mee-AT-uh-plas-tee). Your doctor may recommend doing this in either the office or in the operating room.
 - During this procedure, we make the narrow opening larger with a small cut and sometimes use stitches to keep the area from narrowing back together while healing.
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To Learn More

- Urology
206-987-2509
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

Operating Room Procedure

When will my child be able to go home?

- Most children go home the day of surgery. If your child has another medical condition, they may need to stay longer.

What can my child eat after surgery?



- Your child will start with a light diet.
- Mild nausea and throwing up can be expected on the day of surgery.
- When fully awake, your child may have clear liquids like 7UP, gelatin (Jell-O), Popsicles and apple juice.
- If your child is not sick to their stomach or throwing up and is fully awake, start their regular diet.

How do I care for the surgery site at home?



- Check the penis with each diaper change or 3-5 times a day for potty-trained children.
- Apply petroleum jelly into the meatus each time you check the penis.
- Continue to apply for at least 2 weeks after surgery.

Can my child take a bath, shower, swim or get wet?



- Sponge baths only for the first 24 hours.
- It is okay to take showers the next day.
- Baths are ok after 2 weeks, but no soaking for longer than 10 min each time.
- No swimming for 2 weeks.

What can I expect during the healing process?

- The area around the surgery site will be swollen and red. You may also notice some bruising, yellow crusting, or scabbing. This will get better with time but can take up to 2 months to heal.
- Your child may have an abnormal urine spray while healing.
- Your child may have pain while peeing (called dysuria) for the first 24 hours.
- You can expect mild blood spotting in the diaper or underwear the first days after surgery.
 - If you notice that your child's diaper or underwear is soaked with blood or you can see the surgery site actively dripping with blood, please apply constant pressure to the area for 5 minutes to stop the bleeding.
 - **If the bleeding continues, call the Seattle Children's Main Campus Emergency Room at 206-987-2222.**

How much activity can my child do?

If your child is younger than 2 years of age:



Watch your child closely on the day of surgery.

Younger children will limit their own activities, like crawling and walking. Please ensure that they are not climbing any structures the day of the procedure.

If your child is 2 years of age or older:



On the day of the procedure, have your child avoid strenuous activities or rough play. A good guideline for your child is to keep both feet on the ground during this time.

For 2 weeks, no:

- Jungle-gyms and climbing
- Gym class / physical education (PE)
- Ride bicycles or tricycles
- Play after-school sports

When can my child return to school?

- Your child may return to school when they no longer need prescription pain medicine or frequent daytime over-the-counter pain medicines.
- School staff will need to be comfortable putting the petroleum jelly on your child's penis unless your child can do this.

Will my child have pain after surgery?

- After surgery, your child will likely feel pain in the groin. Your child should feel better the next day.
- We partner with you and your child to relieve pain as much as possible. You know your child best. We encourage you to take an active part in your child's recovery. No matter the level of your child's pain, believe they are hurting and respond right away.

How do I manage my child's pain?



- Effective pain control will help your child feel better and heal faster. Start by giving your child acetaminophen (Tylenol) alternating every 3 hours with ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) for the first 2 days after surgery and then you will use it as needed. Check with the healthcare provider first before giving any type of medicine to your child.
- If your child's healthcare provider prescribed an opioid medicine for pain, use this if the acetaminophen or ibuprofen does not help relieve pain.
- Acetaminophen and prescription pain medicine may not be safe to use at the same time. Check with your healthcare provider or pharmacy.
- In addition to medicine for pain, you can also help your child cope by distracting them with music, games, books, TV or videos.
- For more information about pain, read our handout "Acute Pain". seattlechildrens.org/pdf/PE503.pdf

How do I dispose of leftover opioid pain medicine?

- To keep your family safe, store medicines inside a locked cabinet or location where others cannot easily get to them. Once your child has recovered from surgery, dispose of all unused prescription medicines.
- Taking leftover pain or other medicines, on purpose or by accident, can be very dangerous.
- For more information about safe disposal of unused opioid medicine, read our handout “Safe Use and Disposal of Opioid Medicines” (seattlechildrens.org/pdf/PE3140.pdf) or visit takebackyourmeds.org to find a take-back place near you.

In-office Procedure

What do I need to know before the procedure?

- You can make your appointment for in-office procedure by calling **206-987-2509**.
- **It is important to arrive on time for this appointment or we may cancel the procedure.**
- Please arrange childcare for your child's siblings during the procedure visit.
- Expect to be here about 1 hour. The procedure itself will take about 10 minutes with the doctor. You will likely be able to go home about 10-15 minutes after the procedure.
- Please be aware: depending on the procedure, the physician may ask the parent(s) to leave the room.
- **Required items to bring to visit:**
 - Children's ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin)
 - Children's acetaminophen (Tylenol)
 - Petroleum jelly (Vaseline)
 - Clean diapers (if your child is not toilet trained)
- Child Life Therapy (to help with anxiety and distraction techniques) will be available for children 2 years and older.
- Your child can eat and drink any time before and up to the procedure.
- Please bring anything from home that will help to comfort and distract your child.

What can I expect after the procedure?

- The penis may look red and swollen. It will return to normal in a few weeks.
- Your child may have pain while peeing (called dysuria) for the first 24 hours.

How do I care for the surgery site at home?



- Check your child's penis with each diaper change or at least 5 times daily.
- Apply petroleum jelly into the opening of the penis (meatus) each time you check.
 - This may cause your child to have an abnormal spray when peeing.
- If active bleeding occurs, apply constant pressure around the whole penis with a clean washcloth for 5 minutes. **If the bleeding continues, take your child to a hospital emergency room.**

Will my child have pain after surgery?

- After surgery, your child will likely feel pain in the groin. Your child should feel better the next day.
- We partner with you and your child to relieve pain as much as possible. You know your child best. We encourage you to take an active part in your child's recovery. No matter the level of your child's pain, believe they are hurting and respond right away. Effective pain control will help your child feel better and heal faster.

How do I manage my child's pain?



- Start by giving your child acetaminophen (Tylenol) alternating every 3 hours with ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) for the first 2 days after surgery and then you will use it as needed. Check with the healthcare provider first before giving any type of medicine to your child.

Can my child take a bath, shower, swim or get wet?



- Sponge baths only for the first 24 hours, then return to regular bathing.
- No swimming for at least 7 days.

How much activity can my child do?



- Avoid wrestling, contact sports, and rough play for the first few days to promote healing.

When do I call?

Before the procedure:

Please contact your provider's office if your child has any of these symptoms:

- Pain while peeing
- Having a harder time peeing or feeling the need to push the pee out
- **If your child cannot pee for a span of 8 hours, please go to your local emergency room.**

After the procedure:

For questions or any of the concerns listed below, call the Urology Clinic Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at **206-987-2509**. Send MyChart messages for non-urgent questions.

After hours, call **206-987-2000** and ask for the Urology resident on call for urgent concerns from the following list:

- Fever higher than 101.5° F (38.6° C)
 - Redness, swelling or discharge (fluid) from the wound
 - Rapid swelling or bleeding from the surgery site
 - Severe, constant pain at the surgery site not controlled by the medicine prescribed
 - Throwing up (vomiting) 4 or more times in 12 hours
 - Cannot pee for 8 hours after surgery
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