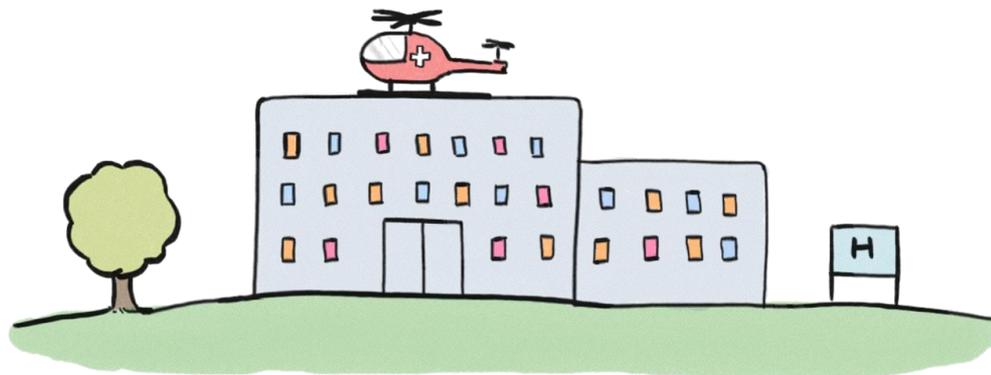


# Getting Ready for An Operation

An activity story book to help children prepare for an operation



Written By: Tanuja Nair, CCLS, CCRT & Nur Shazalyn Binte Abdullah, CCLS

Edited by: Deborah B. Vilas, MS, CCLS, LMSW

Illustrations By: Markéta Královcová

Recommended ages: 4-10 years

Acknowledgements:

Child Life Therapy – Child Life, Art and Music Therapy Programmes (CHAMPs), Cardiothoracic Surgery Service (CTS), Department of Paediatric Surgery (PAS), Department of Paediatric Anaesthesia (PAN), Corporate Communications and Marketing Communications



KK Women's and  
Children's Hospital

SingHealth

Published by KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH)

KK Women's and Children's Hospital

100 Bukit Timah Road, Singapore 229899

Tel: +6-CALL KKH (+65 6-2255 554)

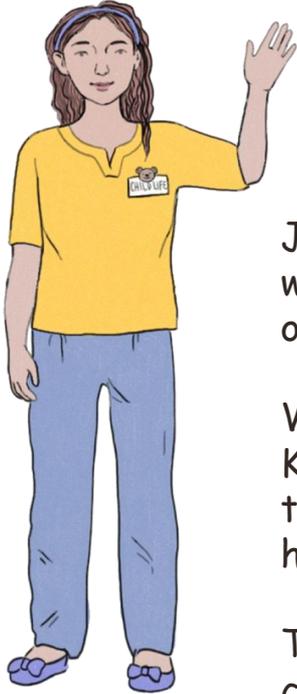
Website: [www.kkh.com.sg](http://www.kkh.com.sg)

© KK Women's and Children's Hospital, 2022.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owners. For permission requests, please write to "KKH Child Life Therapy- CHAMPs (Child Life, Art and Music Therapy Programmes)" at the above address.

ISBN: 978-981-18-7023-1 (Digital)

# You are a warrior!



*Have you ever wondered what it means to go for an operation?*

*What happens to you and how does it feel?*

Join Jamee as she learns and shares more about what happens to her and her body as she prepares for an operation.

Written and edited by certified Child Life Specialists from KK Women's and Children's Hospital, Singapore and from the United States of America, this book gives an insight into the hospital journey from the perspective of a child.

This book also contains useful information to support parents and caregivers on getting their child ready for a heart operation.



Happy Reading!

# Foreword

Dear Champion Warrior,

Welcome to this story and activity book!

As you get ready for your operation, you may have many feelings about it. You might be excited about how the operation will help your body work better or you might be nervous because you do not know what to expect.

We are here to tell you that all feelings are normal and okay. Most kids feel better when they know what to expect. Through this book, we will explain what will happen in the hospital, and help you to feel more comfortable and ready for your operation.

Do try out the activities inside this book to help you understand about your operation too. If there is a Child Life Specialist/ Child Life Therapist in the hospital you are going to, please ask your parents/ caregivers to reach out to them so that they can support you. They can answer questions, help you know what to expect and bring you toys/ games to play with.

Take care and be well! 

# ★ Content Page ★

	Page
Story	1 - 8, 13 - 22 and 25 - 28
Video Activities	9 - 12
Reflection Activities	23 - 24
Glossary	29
Answer Key to Video Activities	30 - 34
Caregiver Tips	35 - 41
Additional Resources	42



**Hi, my name is Jamee!**





**I like to run and play.**

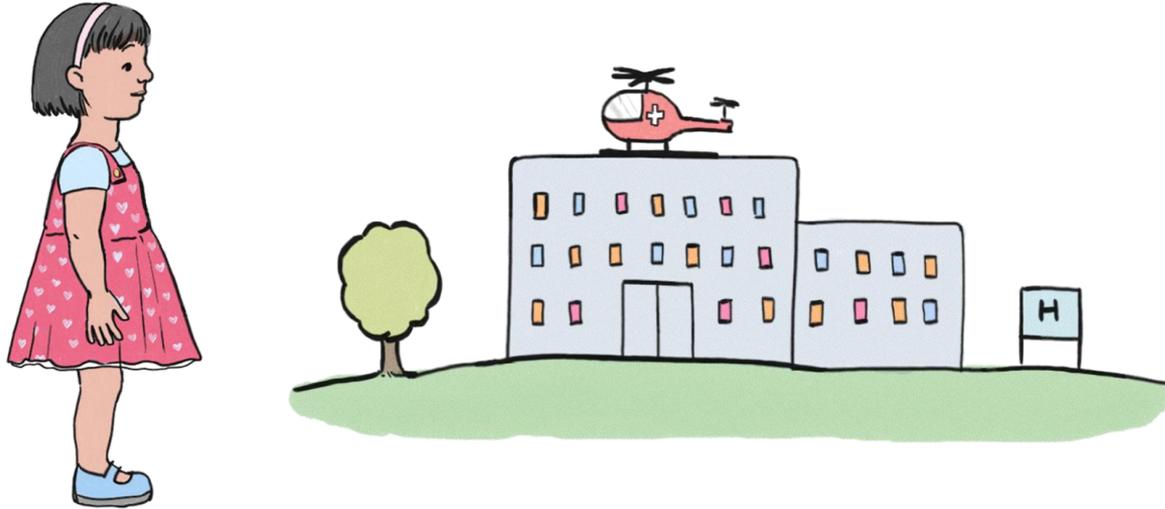


**I also like to  
read and dance.**





**One day, as I was reading  
my book, I felt some pain  
in my tummy.**



**Mummy brought me to the hospital for a check-up.**

**After the check-up, the doctor said that I needed to come back for an operation to help my tummy feel better.**



**My doctor shared a video to explain what an operation is.  
You can watch it with me too!**



**Preparing for Your Operation at KKH**



SCAN ME!

<https://bit.ly/3Y3vKXt>

**Let's now try some activities to remember what we have learned from the video!**

**You can ask a trusted grown-up to help you with these activities too.**



# Operation Word Search

Activity #1

Search for the words and circle them once they are found.



**OPERATION**

**WARD**

**DRIP**

**SLEEPY**

**SURGEON**

**BRAVE**

**MASK**

**NURSE**

**FRIENDLY**

**NIL BY MOUTH**

**HOSPITAL**

**BODY**

**SORE**



# In the Hospital

Fill in the blanks

1. This person will perform my operation. He/ She is known as a:

S U      G      N

2. I will meet this friendly person in the wards who will help me. He/ She is a:

U R

3. In the wards, my height and \_\_\_\_\_ will be checked:

I G

4. I will also be given a wrist tag that will show my \_\_\_\_\_:

N E



# True or False?

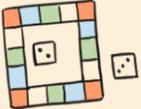
Read the following questions and circle the correct answer.

1. An operation can help my body to get better and stronger.      TRUE      FALSE
2. The sleepy medicine will help me stay comfortable during the operation. After the operation, I will wake up.      TRUE      FALSE
3. I cannot bring my favourite soft toy into the operating theatre.      TRUE      FALSE
4. The Doctor will give me some medicine after my operation to help me to feel better.      TRUE      FALSE



# In the Wards

When I am in the hospital, these are some things I can do to relax and feel a little better.

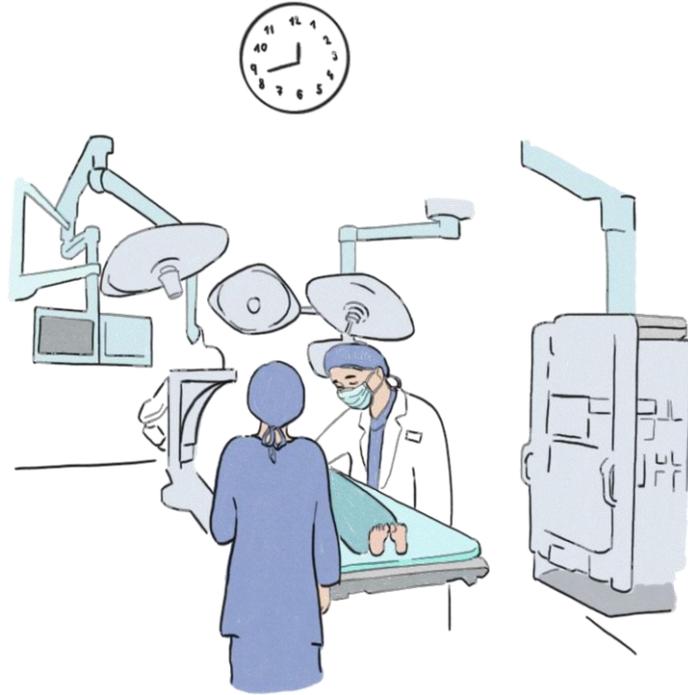
Hint	Things I can do
	
	
	
	
	

**Did you have fun with  
the activities? I did!**

**Let's now return to my  
story shall we?**



**The operation might take a while.  
During this time, I will be sleeping comfortably.**



**A doctor called the anaesthetist will place a soft mask over my nose and mouth. I can ask to watch some cartoons while the mask is being put on.**

**Using this mask, I will breathe in the sleepy medicine which will help me to sleep deeply during the operation.**



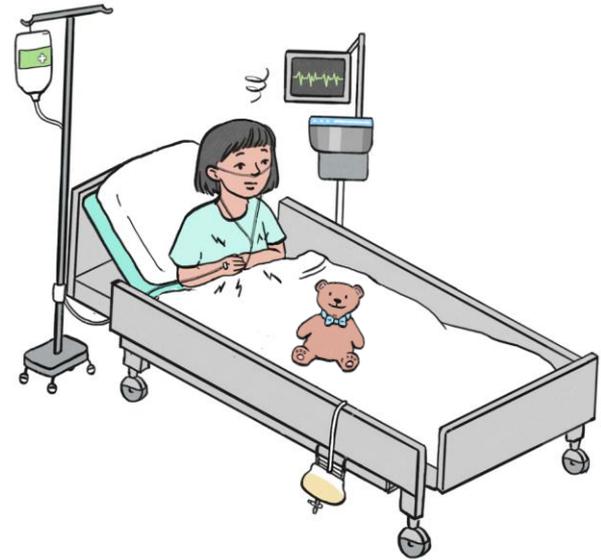
**When I wake up after the operation, I may need to have some help to breathe better through a soft and thin tube in my nose called an oxygen cannula.**

**Once I feel better, the oxygen cannula will be removed.**



**I may also feel tired and dizzy. My stomach may feel a little uncomfortable too due to the sleepy medicine.**

**If I feel unwell, I can let the doctors and nurses know. They can help me feel better. I can also hug my favourite toy or someone I trust to feel safe.**



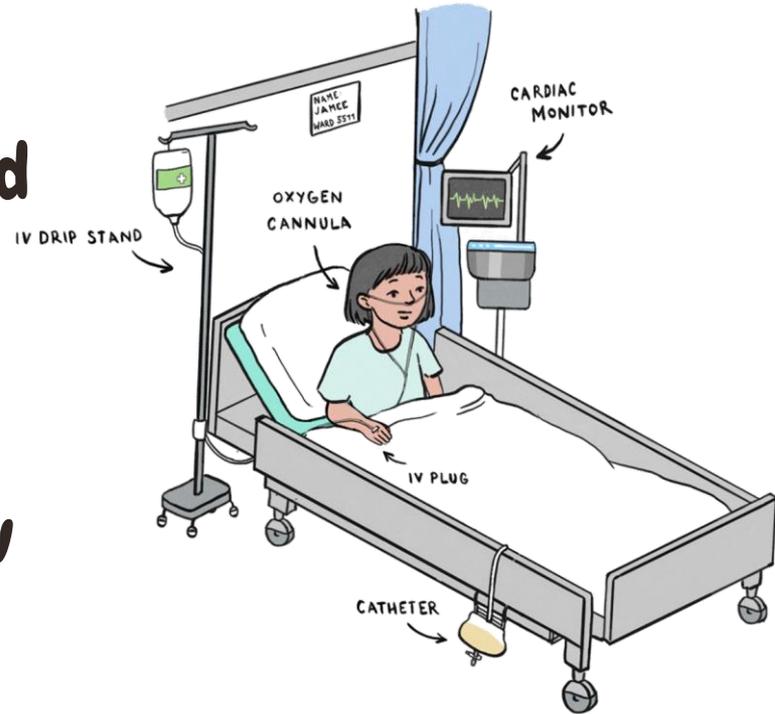
**There may be some machines around me.**

**They tell the doctors and nurses how well my body is doing and what it needs to feel better.**



**I may also notice some tubes in me when I am in my ward. These tubes help medicine and liquid go into my body.**

**Sometimes a catheter is also needed to help my urine flow better too.**

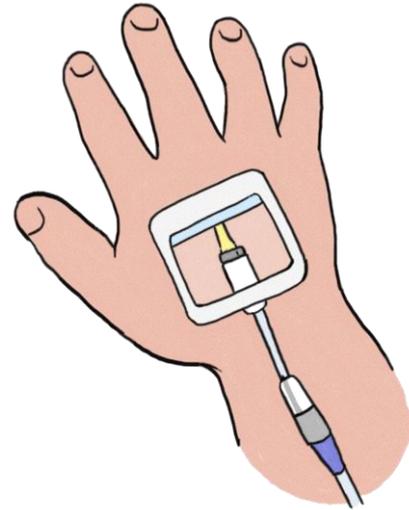


**The IV plug in my hand is a tiny straw that helps the medicine to flow into my veins to help me to feel better.**



**The IV plug may feel uncomfortable for a while but this tiny straw is there to help my body to take in the medicines.**

**The nurse will help to care for it and she will be gentle. The nurse will take it out before I go home.**

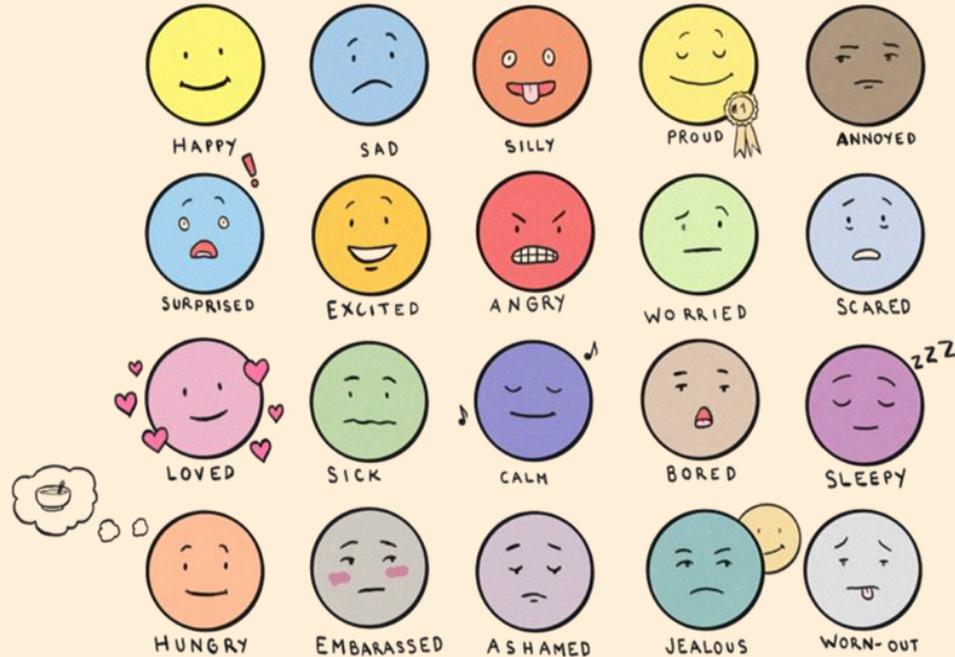


**This may be my first time seeing this.  
I may have many thoughts and feelings about it.**



# Feelings Chart

If you were Jamee, how would you feel about the operation?  
Circle the faces that show how you feel.



# Coping with My Feelings

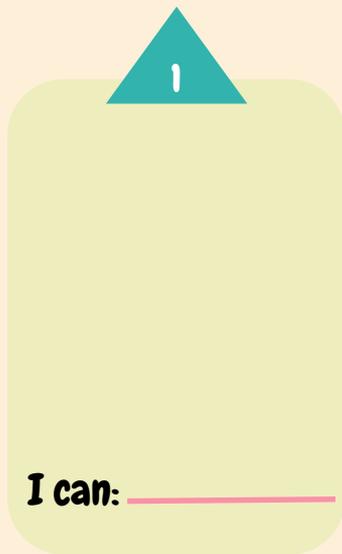
Choose 1 difficult feeling you had from page 23 and draw it in the circle.

Can you think of 3 ways to help yourself feel better?

You can write or draw your answers below.

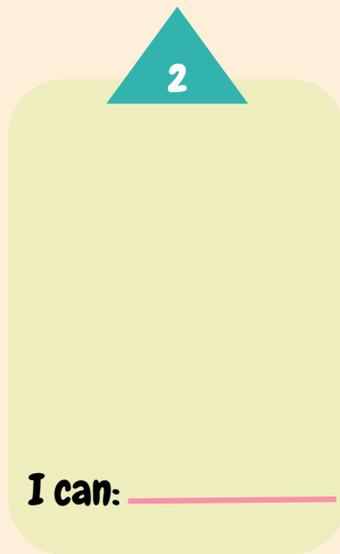


**Difficult  
Feeling:** \_\_\_\_\_



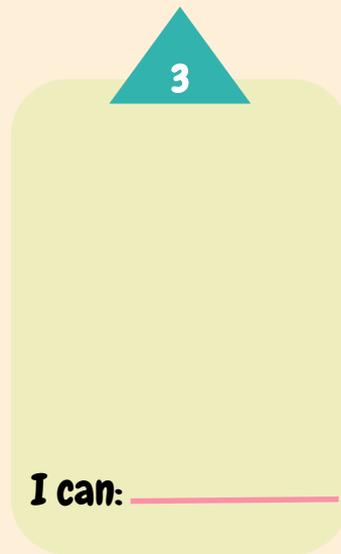
**1**

**I can:** \_\_\_\_\_



**2**

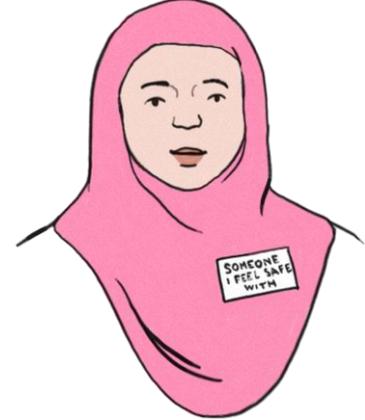
**I can:** \_\_\_\_\_



**3**

**I can:** \_\_\_\_\_

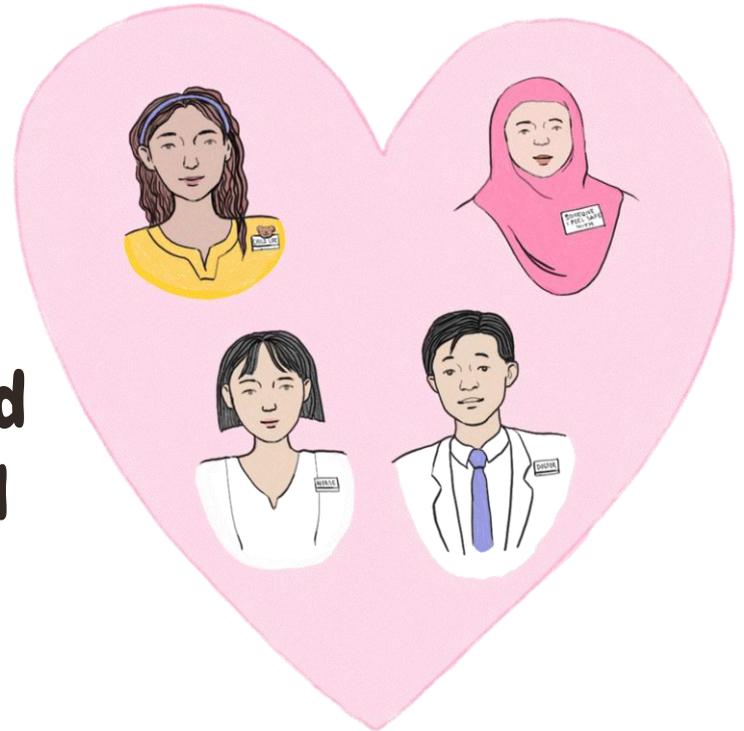
**I can also talk to the child life specialist or any other grown-up I feel comfortable and safe with when I feel this way.**



**They can help me to cope with my feelings and thoughts.**

**I am not alone in this journey.  
I may get a little scared  
sometimes and that is okay.**

**I am just glad that I have trusted  
grown-ups to talk to when I feel  
this way and activities to do to  
feel better too.**



**Once my body is stronger and ready,  
I will be able to go home!**



**I am ready for my operation!**



# Glossary

Here's a list of some of the new words that I have learnt about from this book !



## Word

## Illustration

## Explanation

**Anaesthetist**

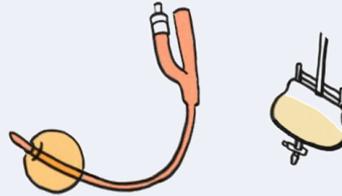
**Page 15**



**A doctor who gives me  
sleepy medicine so that I can  
rest during an operation**

**Catheter**

**Page 19**



**A temporary tube that  
helps to remove waste  
from my body (e.g. urine)**

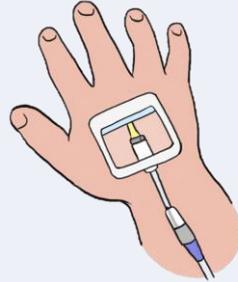
## Word

## Illustration

## Explanation

**IV Plug**

**Page 20**



**A tiny straw that is placed under my skin to help spread medicine into my body more quickly**

**Operation**

**Page 14**



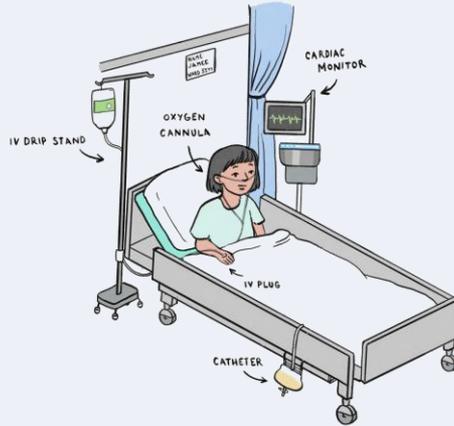
**Something the doctor has to do to my body to help get it better and stronger**

**Word**

**Illustration**

**Explanation**

**Ward**  
**Page 19**



**A place where I will stay  
when I am in the hospital**

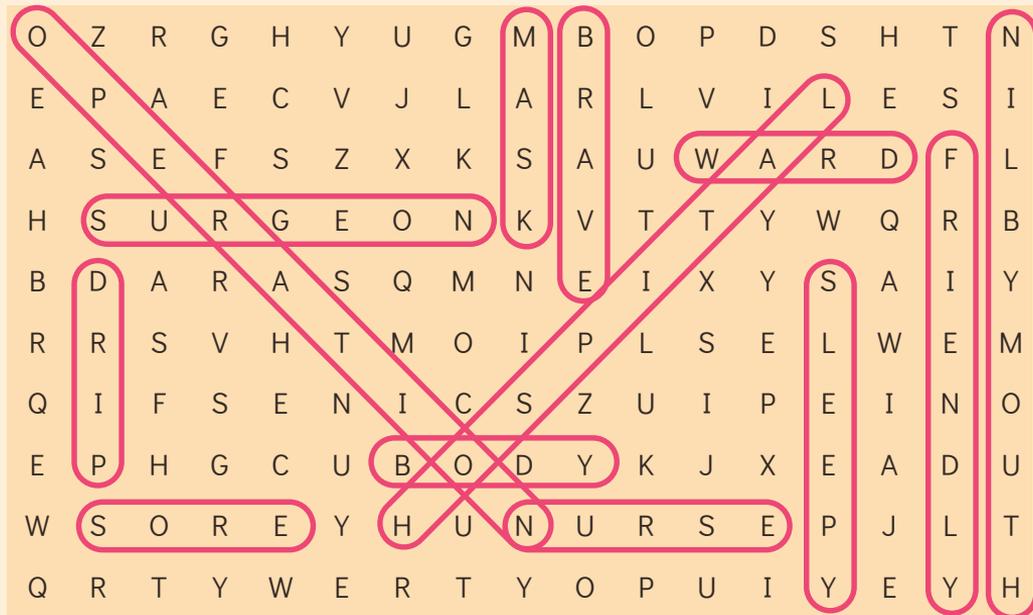
# Answer Key

Here are the answers to the activities in this book!



# Operation Word Search

Search for the words and circle them once they are found.



**OPERATION**

**WARD**

**DRIP**

**SLEEPY**

**SURGEON**

**BRAVE**

**MASK**

**NURSE**

**FRIENDLY**

**NIL BY MOUTH**

**HOSPITAL**

**BODY**

**SORE**

Answer #1

# In the Hospital

Fill in the blanks

1. This person will perform my operation. He/ She is known as a:

S U R G E O N

2. I will meet this friendly person in the wards who will help me. He/ She is a:

N U R S E

3. In the wards, my height and \_\_\_\_\_ will be checked:

W E I G H T

4. I will also be given a wrist tag that will show my \_\_\_\_\_:

N A M E



# True or False?

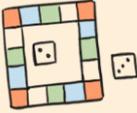
Read the following questions and circle the correct answer.

1. An operation can help my body to get better and stronger.  TRUE  FALSE
2. The sleepy medicine will help me stay comfortable during the operation. After the operation, I will wake up.  TRUE  FALSE
3. I cannot bring my favourite soft toy into the operating theatre.  TRUE  FALSE
4. The Doctor will give me some medicine after my operation to help me to feel better.  TRUE  FALSE



# In the Wards

When I am in the hospital, these are some things I can do to relax and feel a little better.

Hint	Things I can do
	<b>Play a game</b>
	<b>Read a book</b>
	<b>Listen to music</b>
	<b>Draw and paint</b>
	<b>Watch a show/ Play on handphone</b>

## Tips for Caregivers

The following section provides caregivers with some helpful ideas and strategies. Engaging in medical pretend play and open communication can help children understand and prepare for their operation better.



# Medical Play- Origami Mask

Let's fold an origami anaesthesia mask and practice how to use it!

You can use the template provided on the next page.

1



Fold the square paper into 3 equal parts. Unfold.

2



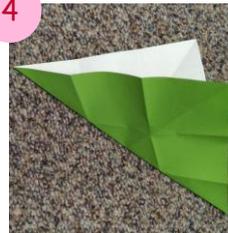
Fold it into another 3 equal parts. Unfold.

3



Fold it diagonally. Unfold.

4



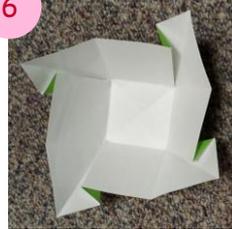
Fold it diagonally on the other side. Unfold.

5



Use the folds in each corner to guide you in this step.

6



Repeat for all 4 corners.

7



Fold the corners inwards and tape them down!

8



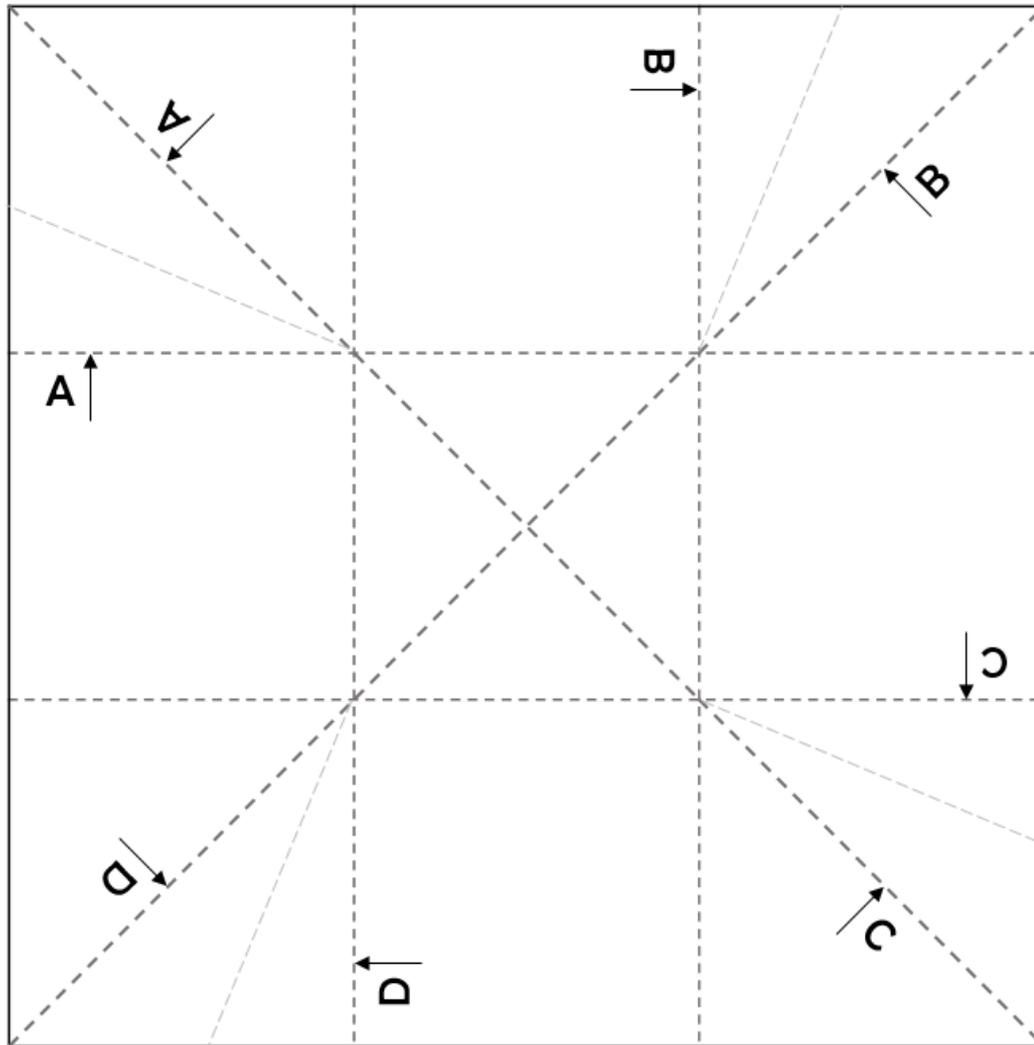
All done!

SCAN ME!



<https://bit.ly/3W5b3so>

**Origami  
Anaesthesia  
Mask  
Template**





# Medical Pretend Play in the Operation Room



Invite child to role play with you about going for an operation. Request child to lie down on the 'operating bed' (can be child's bed with a sheet over it or on a yoga mat perhaps)



Offer child the option to practise either with the origami anaesthesia mask which will be placed over his/ her mouth and nose or to use his/her hands instead. Let child know that he/ she will breathe in the sleepy medicine which will allow him/ her to sleep during the operation.



When child is ready and comfortable, suggest to child to close his/ her eyes and take in a few deep breaths to the count of: Breathe In...1...2...3...4... Breathe out.

Repeat this a few times and invite child to pretend to fall asleep.



Remove the mask.

Wait for a few seconds and announce that the operation is over.

Invite child to open his/ her eyes.

Offer praise to him/ her for doing a good job!

# Medical Pretend Play- IV Plug Setting

## Getting to know an IV cannula...

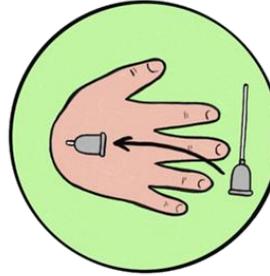


### Anaesthesia mask

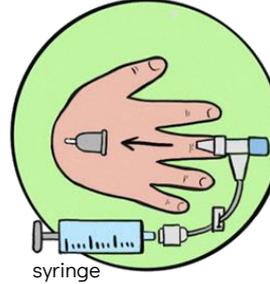
This is a soft mask which will be placed over my nose and mouth. This mask will help me to sleep and rest during the operation.



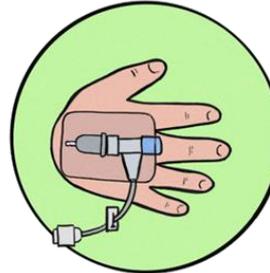
1



2



3



### Cannula

This is a tiny straw which will be placed in my hand to help my body “drink” the medicine so that I can feel better.

### Connecting Tube

This is a plastic tube which will be attached to my cannula. The doctor or nurse uses this to put some medicine or fluid into my body with a syringe.

### Tegaderm

This is a clear plaster which is placed on top of the cannula and connecting tube so that they will not move.

# Comfort List

Make a comfort list to identify things which will help your child to feel safe and comfortable while in the hospital. Work together to build this list.

## My Comfort List



- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_

### Hints

- Having a favourite blanket
- Having a trusted adult give hugs
- Having a favourite toy

# How to Offer Comfort and Reassurance



## Listen

1

Listen to your child/ ward with an open mind and do not be quick to dismiss their fears. Children need to feel that they are being listened to and this will help to allay their anxieties. Give them your time and be present as they share.

2

## Encourage sharing of feelings

Encourage your child/ ward to share their feelings through play, art and music. Allow them to share what they want to - there is no right or wrong here.

3

## Pretend play!

Rehearse steps leading up to the operation and clarify their understanding through role playing. Practice with a stuffed toy or watch a video that shows the steps if child/ ward needs more time to warm up to the idea of an operation.

4

## Check for understanding

Check and ask your child/ ward to explain what he/ she understands or has heard.

5

## Be patient

Do not force your child/ ward to share or role play if he/ she is not ready to do so.

## Reassuring Phrases

you can use with your child

- "I see that you look worried/ scared. That is an okay feeling to have. If you are comfortable, you can share your feelings with me and I will try to support you".
- "Let's try \_\_\_\_\_ and see if it helps you to feel a little better".
- "I understand that this might seem scary to you. I do not have an answer just yet but we can ask the doctor/ nurse to help us when we see them next".

# Fun Sheet



At the next hospital visit, help your child to create a special “treasure map” about their hospital journey. Using this sheet as a sample, design your own map with words and pictures. Think of a fun activity to do together at the end of the hospital journey as a reward (e.g. going to the beach together).

**1 About Me...**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Height: \_\_\_\_\_

Weight: \_\_\_\_\_



**2 My Surgeon is...**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



**4 My Nurse is...**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



**3 My Child Life Therapist is...**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



**5 My \_\_\_\_\_ is...**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



**6 Back Home...**

I did it! My reward is:

\_\_\_\_\_

# For Additional Resources







**The End!**