

## Members of the Pediatric Surgery Team that will be caring for your child:

- **Attending surgeon:** This is the surgeon that will supervise your child's care and surgery
- **Pediatric surgery or Anesthesia fellow:** A general surgeon or anesthesiologist training to be a pediatric-specific surgeon or anesthesiologist
- **Attending Anesthesiologist:** The pediatric anesthesiologist physician that will provide and oversee your child's anesthesia
- **Advanced practice provider:** Nurse anesthetist, nurse practitioner and/or physician assistant who may care for your child while hospitalized
- **Resident:** Surgical and anesthesia physicians training to become a general surgeon or anesthesiologist
- **Nurse:** Clinical caregiver who will provide and coordinate care at the bedside
- **Child life specialist:** Clinical caregiver who can help your child adjust to being in the hospital and preparing for surgery
- Other team members available include **Social workers, Dieticians, and Interpreters**

All,  
for  
your  
one. <sup>SM</sup> 

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# Appendicitis

Important Information for  
Patients & Families



# Appendicitis

## What is the Appendix?

The appendix is a small tube shaped extension that hangs down from the large intestine. The appendix does not have any function in our bodies, but when it becomes swollen or irritated, it can cause a lot of pain or make your child sick.



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## What is Appendicitis?

When the appendix becomes swollen or irritated (also called 'inflamed'), it is called appendicitis. Appendicitis is relatively common in children, but in most cases the exact cause is unknown.

Ask your providers any questions that you have about your child's care

## What is the Treatment for Appendicitis?

Based on your child's condition, your doctor/care team will make a recommendation to remove your child's appendix to prevent further problems.

Treatment usually includes:

1. Appendectomy – Surgery to remove the appendix
2. Antibiotics – Medications to fight infection
3. Pain medications – Help manage pain after surgery

At this time, we suspect that your child has early appendicitis and will be able to go home within 24 hours of having surgery – That is our goal!

However, until the surgery is performed, it is difficult to confirm whether your child's appendicitis is considered acute or complicated --

- **Acute** means that the appendix has not burst, and your child may go home within 24 hours; antibiotics are not needed after surgery
- **Complicated** means that the appendix may have burst, and your child will need to stay longer in the hospital for treatment

# Appendectomy

## Before Surgery

Your child will receive fluids and antibiotics through an intravenous (IV) catheter; and pain medications as needed before surgery. Your child will not be able to eat or drink before surgery.

## During Surgery

Your child will have one of the following types of appendectomy to remove their appendix:

- **Laparoscopic appendectomy** (most common) – The appendix is removed through small incisions (cuts) made in the abdomen, using special instruments
- **Open appendectomy** – The appendix is removed through a larger incision made in the lower right abdomen

## After Surgery

Your child will be observed for some time by the care team in the post-anesthesia care unit (PACU). After this, your child will be transferred to a patient bed.

Your child will be ready for discharge once they have walked, had enough fluids to drink, urinated, and have their pain controlled.