


# Post-Operative Discharge Checklist

This checklist is not meant to be comprehensive. Additions and modifications to fit local practice are encouraged.

Care First Days Post-Operation	Care First Week Post-Operation	Care 7+ Days Post-Operation
<p><i>Surgical/Post-Operation Team reviews:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the patient awake and managing his/her breathing?</li> <li>• Have the parent(s) been instructed how to feed their child (using bottle, spoon and/or breast)?</li> <li>• Has the child been given his/her first feeding after surgery by his/her parent(s) in the presence of a nurse?</li> <li>• Show parent(s) how to clean skin wound with water and a cotton swab (<i>not for intra-oral wounds and incisions</i>).</li> <li>• Check to be sure appropriate supplies will be available for discharge.</li> </ul> 	<p><i>Surgeon, Nurse or Social Worker review with parent(s)/guardian before discharge:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the parent(s) been given all required medicines and/or ointments?</li> <li>• Encourage parent(s) to continue to do appropriate wound care.</li> <li>• Instruct parent(s) to maintain feeding the child soft food/filtered liquid for approximately 7 days after operation.</li> <li>• Tell parent(s) if the child does not have dissolvable stitches, they will need to return to the surgeon/hospital or a designated local doctor to remove them approximately 7 days after surgery.</li> <li>• Has the parent(s) been told of warning signs and to <b>seek medical attention</b> in case of infection or complications (bleeding, swelling, pus, redness, tenderness, heat from the wound or fever)?</li> <li>• Give parent(s) phone numbers and instructions to call the surgeon/hospital or their local physician in case of questions or emergency. Additionally, ensure the hospital has contact details, including mobile phone number, for the family.</li> <li>• Inform the parent(s) that future treatment may involve additional surgeries, speech therapy and /or orthodontics. Discuss a potential timetable for future cleft surgical and treatment needs.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Nurse or Social Worker review with parent(s)/guardian before discharge:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For lip repair, instruct parent(s) to wash surgical wounds with soap &amp; water until wound closes and heals.</li> <li>• Tell the parent(s) to apply a cream (or emollient) to the skin wound after the wound fully heals (no later than 4 weeks post-surgery).             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Demonstrate to parent(s) how to massage the lip (columella) with the cream downward with thumb once wound heals for 4-5 minutes twice a day for 3 months.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Instruct the parent(s) when the child may begin to eat solid foods, based on his/her age and type of operation.</li> <li>• Explain to the parent(s) the importance of returning for a follow up visit in 3-6 months (for a cleft lip) or 9-12 months (for a cleft palate).</li> <li>• Has the parent(s) confirmed that they understand all written and verbal instructions for patient care after surgery?</li> <li>• <b>Thank the patient for letting you be their medical resource. Tell them that if they know anyone else who could be helped by treatment, to please inform that individual about this treatment.</b></li> </ul>