

Hospital Preparation

Surgery time is a stressful time for us all and one of the things we have a hard time focusing on is trying to remember what to pack for the hospital. So we put together this list of things to help guide you in this task

For the patient:
 Current Medications
 Pajamas, Bathrobe, Slippers Socks Underwear (or diapers if appropriate)
 Comfy clothes Formula (if appropriate) Toothbrush /
 toothpaste Lotion Chap Stick Hairbrush / comb
 Favorite Blanket and pillow Favorite Stuffed Animal
 Other comfort items (i.e. Pacifier, sippy cup, etc) Favorite Videos (make sure VHS and not DVD; most hospitals do not have DVD players)
 Favorite Books
 - "Matty's Heart Book" (available through www.kidswithheart.org) Fun
 activities (i.e. few favorite toys, playdoh, legos, dolls, puzzles, leappads, etc)
 Some pictures / photo album Music tapes or CD's (may want to bring a tape/CD player just in case) School work (if appropriate, although not sure child would be too thrilled with this one)
 - Bubbles (not only fun, but helps in the respiratory therapy to help with fluid build up)
 NOTE: For shirts and pajama tops try and get ones that button or snap, or something that does not involve lifting arms over the head; not too comfortable doing this after surgery.

TIP: If you have a toddler or older child something fun you may do is get a special suitcase just for him/her and let them help you pack their fun items in it, such as toys, videos, books, etc. That way they feel they have some control over what is happening and it helps to make it a little less scary for them. Plus they will know when they get there that they have some of their fun things with them.

For Parents or Care Givers:
 Comfortable Clothes (remember you will be doing a lot of sitting) Underwear, socks, comfortable shoes (slip on shoes are good) Pajamas, Robe, Slippers Toothbrush / toothpaste Hairbrush / comb (ladies don't forget hair ties) if you have long hair
 Personal Hygiene Items (i.e. shampoo, deodorant, lotion, chap stick, razors, etc)
 Any medications/vitamins you may need Books / Magazines
 Simple pastimes (i.e.: needle point, cross stitch, puzzle books, scrap booking, models, etc) Camera Calling Card (if appropriate)
 Address book / important numbers to call Journal Notebook
 Money for meals and snacks (parking if applicable; hopefully it is not)
 Cell Phone Important Info for patient (i.e.: insurance card, allergies, etc.)
 - A messenger bag or backpack to keep all items such as money, cell phone, address book, magazines, activities, etc in. Much easier to keep up with those things and transport back and forth from the hotel / RMH and hospital.

NOTE: Some may think a camera is odd, but it may be something your child wants to see or know about when they are older, so a few pictures here and there would be a good idea. Also for the journal, that can be used to write your thoughts, frustrations etc. You can keep it or throw it away afterwards, but it does help to have your own private "vent" place. The notebook is good to use to keep by the patients bedside or near by to keep your own records of what meds are given and when. What they ate and how much, any kind of important notes that you should keep up with so you are aware of what is going on etc. I keep a log of all meds Xander is given that way I am double checking them and keeping up with is pain meds so he is not getting uncomfortable. I also jot notes down from the doctor rounds and any tests that he may have that particular day, so we know what to expect.