Making sure your child is safe
Our goal at Children’s is to give your child the safest possible care. Using medicines to relax your child or make him sleepy puts him at risk for falling down and getting hurt. To help keep your child safe and prevent harm, please follow the instructions below based on your child’s age. If you have any questions or concerns about your child at any time, please speak up and let us know.

How do I care for my child after sedation?
Sedation uses medicines to help your child be relaxed, calm and sleepy (sedated). It is often used during certain medical tests and procedures. It can help your child stay calm, be able to lie still and have less pain. Your child will need special care when you go home. Our staff will talk with you about specific care for your child. Some general guidelines include:

- Do not leave your child alone until he is completely awake and alert. Watch your child closely for the first hour after discharge. Check him closely every hour after that for 6 hours.
- Do not give your child anything to eat or drink until he is fully awake and alert, or as your doctor instructs.
- Keep the lights, activity and noise levels low until your child is fully awake so that he can rest well.
- Protect your child from falls, sharp objects and other possible dangers.
- Some children may become restless, agitated or combative from the medicine. Calm and reassure your child if this happens. This does not last long and should wear off within a few hours.
- Your child should not return to day care, school or work for the next 12 to 24 hours.

How do I care for a baby (newborn to one year)?

- Keep your baby on his side while he sleeps to help prevent problems if he vomits.
- Gently place your baby’s head to the side if he is sleeping in a child safety seat or stroller. This helps to prevent problems if he vomits.
- Since the medicines may relax your child’s muscles, watch your baby closely when playing, sitting up or crawling.
- Feed your baby when he is awake and able to suck. Start with clear fluids, such as water or half-strength apple juice. Do not prop your baby’s bottle.
- Resume a regular feeding schedule when your baby is fully awake and taking fluids without problem.
- Your baby should wet his diaper every 4 to 6 hours. This shows that he is getting enough fluids.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.
How do I care for a toddler or school-age child?

- Place your child on his side while sleeping to help prevent problems if he vomits.
- Gently place your child’s head to the side if he is sleeping in a child safety seat or stroller. This helps to prevent problems if he vomits.
- Provide quiet indoor activities, such as coloring, reading or TV. Have your child avoid activities that need balance and coordination, such as biking, swimming and skating, for about 24 hours.
- Help your child climb stairs safely.
- Resume a regular diet once he is taking fluids, and keep him on a regular feeding schedule.
- Stay with your child as he eats and bathes for the next 6 to 12 hours.

How do I care for a teenager?

- Do not leave your child at home alone for the next 6 to 12 hours.
- Provide quiet indoor activities, such as listening to music, reading or TV. Have your child avoid activities that need balance and coordination, such as biking, swimming and skating, for about 24 hours. Your child should not resume sports until the doctor tells you it is OK.
- Have your child drink plenty of fluids. Resume a regular diet once he is taking fluids.
- Stay with your child as he eats for the next 6 hours.
- Your child may not drive for the next 24 hours.

How do I care for a child with special needs?

- Stay with your child for the next 24 hours. Your child may need more help than usual during this time.
- Place your child on his side while sleeping to help prevent problems if he vomits.
- Do not allow your child to sleep in his wheelchair.
- Help your child with his adaptive equipment, such as wheelchair and walker.
- Give your child plenty of fluids. Keep your child on a regular feeding schedule, and resume his “usual” diet once he is taking fluids.
- Stay with your child when he eats and bathes for the next 24 hours.

When should I call the doctor?

Call 911 or your local ambulance service right away if your child:

- Is so sleepy he hardly responds to you.
- Finds it hard to breathe or take a breath.
- Has chest retractions (skin pulls in around the ribs and chest when breathing).
- Grunts when he breathes.
- Has a blue or dark purple color to the nail beds, lips or gums.
- Stops breathing for more than 10 seconds.
- Cannot speak while trying to breathe.
- Has any problem that needs care right away.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.
Call your child’s doctor if your child:

- Does not smile or show interest in play for at least a few minutes every 4 hours.
- Is hard to wake up or is not fully awake after 6 hours. You should be able to arouse him, even if he falls back asleep.
- Cannot be calmed for at least a few minutes each hour using methods that usually work for your child, such as holding, rocking, pacifiers or soothing talk.
- Wheezes or breathes harder than he did when he was seen by the doctor.
- Your baby is unable to breathe and suck at the same time or chokes when he sucks.
- Has fast, shallow breathing.
- Has a tight feeling in the chest.
- Throws up more than 3 times within the first 12 hours after sedation.
- Has loose, runny stools more than 3 times within the first 12 hours after sedation.
- You have any questions or concerns about how your child looks or feels.