

Preparing for ITB Surgery

Once your child's care team determines that your child would benefit from ITB therapy, you'll get a preoperative packet to help start preparing your child for the pump implantation and help you understand how to prepare for your child's needs following surgery. [Child life specialists](#) and [social workers](#) in [Child and Family Services](#) can address your concerns and prepare for the hospital stay. For information about our hospital amenities, visit [Prepare for Your Visit](#).

Here's a more detailed look at the process to get ready for implanting an ITB pump:

Maintain a Healthy Diet and Digestion

Overall health can affect how well and how quickly your child recovers from an ITB pump implantation.

- **Diet:** Eating adequate amounts of food with iron, calcium and vitamins C and D (fresh colorful fruits and vegetables, dairy food, and other products with added iron and calcium) is helpful. For six weeks before surgery, increase the amount of protein your child consumes—think meats, dairy products, nuts and eggs. This doesn't mean your child should eat more food than usual, just more protein. If weight gain is a concern, substitute servings of protein for servings of carbohydrates.
- **Bowel Management:** If your child has trouble with constipation before or after ITB pump implantation, ask your primary health care provider to develop a treatment plan.

Wean Off Medicines

When scheduling ITB pump implantation, we ask about the medicines your child takes. Before pump implantation, your child might need to gradually stop taking some medicines, such as:

- **Valproic acid (Depakote):** This medication can increase the risk of bleeding after pump implantation. We might perform lab work to determine whether your child should stop taking it before pump implantation.
- **Blood thinners (Coumadin and warfarin):** If your child uses blood thinners, we'll discuss any special procedures or planning required before pump implantation.

Tell Us About Latex Allergies

Gillette is a latex-free facility, but it's still important to tell us if your child has a latex allergy or has ever had a severe reaction to latex.

Manage Stress

Sometimes fears, behavior or expectations related to the upcoming surgery cause stress for families. Contact your child's primary health care provider or [Child and Family Services](#) for support.

Gillette can help with resources that might help reduce anxiety for all of your family members. Our [child life specialists](#) can provide emotional support and distractions (such as toys and movies we can bring to the preoperative waiting area before surgery begins). Child life specialists also can meet with your child's siblings to address their feelings and concerns.

Schedule Presurgery Appointments

You'll hear from us several weeks before surgery to schedule appointments your child will need before their surgery. Appointments typically include:

- [Presurgical Patient Assessment and Risk Evaluation \(PrePARE\)](#): A surgeon might refer you to Gillette's PrePARE Program. The PrePARE program identifies and addresses health issues that could complicate your child's pump implantation or recovery following pump implantation. During the PrePARE evaluations our pediatricians learn important information that is shared with your child's surgeon so we can provide the best possible care before and after pump implantation.
- [Preoperative Rehabilitation Therapy Evaluations](#): Your child might receive [occupational therapy](#) and [physical therapy](#) evaluations before undergoing pump placement. Therapy evaluations prior to pump placement give us a baseline record of your child's strength and range of motion, and level of control while rolling, sitting, standing or walking. In addition, these evaluations allow us to discuss important issues, such as your family's goals for the pump placement.
- [Tour of Gillette](#): A [hospital tour and education session](#) can help your family feel more comfortable before the ITB pump is implanted.
- [Child and Family Services](#): [Child life specialists](#) and [social workers](#) are available to provide emotional support to patients and families before and during hospitalization.

[Plan Ahead for the Return Home](#)

It's important to plan well in advance for discharge from the hospital to address needs that might arise during—and after—the trip home. We begin planning for a successful return home as soon as your family arrives at the hospital. Planning continues throughout your child's stay.

We'll work with you to help make the transition from hospital to home as smooth as possible.

[Wheelchair/Mobility Equipment](#)

If your child uses mobility equipment like a wheelchair or braces (also known as orthoses), plan on bringing these items to use during the hospital stay. This allows us to easily adjust the equipment, if needed. For example, sometimes the wheelchair's seatbelt might need to be adjusted so it doesn't rub on the pump.

[Make An Appointment 651-290-8707](#) [Refer a Patient 651-325-2200](#)

This information is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care providers. If you have any questions, talk with your doctor or others on your health care team.

If you are a Gillette patient with urgent questions or concerns, please contact Telehealth Nursing at [651-229-3890](#).