**Contacting our office**

Our highest priority is for every patient to be able to access our department when they have a question about their care. Please use the following guidelines to contact our office if you have questions about your care:

1. To **schedule an appointment**, please call 202-444-8751 and press option #2
2. Refer to FAQs to see if your question is addressed in our list
3. **Patient Portal**-**This is the best method to get a response within the same day**. Our nurse practitioners will monitor patient messages throughout the day and respond by the end of the workday. Please refer to the last page of your discharge instructions on how to set up the patient portal.
4. **Contacting office**-Call 202-444-7073 to speak to front desk.
5. **After hours care**- For any urgent after hours needs, call 202-444-7243 and ask for the Plastic Surgery Resident on call.
6. To obtain **test results or get a copy of your medical record**, please call 202-444-8751 and press option #3
7. To inquire about **billing or a referral**, please call 202-444-8751 and press option #4
8. To find **directions** to Georgetown Hospital, please call 202-444-8751 and press option #5

**Dr. Baker – Pharyngeal Flap Postoperative Instructions**

**What to Expect:**

Your child will stay in the hospital for 2-4 days. The first day may be spent in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit so your child’s breathing can be closely monitored or he/she may be assigned to the regular pediatric floor. Your child may be irritable and uncomfortable after surgery. You should expect changes in your child’s routine. An IV will be in place to provide energy and fluids until your child is ready to drink on his/her own. Your child may need extra attention for approximately 2 weeks after surgery. This situation is temporary and he/she will return to the normal routine. Don’t worry about spoiling your child during this time. Swelling will peak 24-48 hours after surgery. The swelling is internal, so is may not be obvious visually. Your child may snore while sleeping. Your child may receive humidified air or oxygen via a face mask.

**Suture Care:**

Dissolvable sutures are used and will dissolve on their own. No wound care is needed for the sutures. Your child may need some Vaseline for his/her lips to prevent drying. After eating, the mouth can be rinsed with clear water to prevent crusting and breakdown of intraoral sutures.

**Medications:**

Antibiotics are not used routinely postoperatively. Morphine may be needed for pain control or a narcotic elixir may be used. A prescription will be given to you before hospital discharge. Irritability related to pain should improve in about 3 days. It is important to discontinue the narcotics as soon as possible. Try weaning to regular Tylenol soon after surgery. Narcotic pain medications can cause constipation.

**Restraints:**

Typically restraints are not necessary. However, if the child is very young, restraints will be recommended. For three weeks after surgery avoid letting your child put anything hard and/or sharp near the sutured area. No straws, forks or popsicle sticks should be given. Do not allow child to use balloons, pencils, sharp pointed toys, small toys, rocking horse, crayons, or tricycle for 2-3 weeks after surgery.

**Positioning:**

The head of the bed should be elevated above the level of the heart to reduce swelling. At home, your child may sleep with 2-3 pillows.

**Activity:**

Encourage return to normal activity to help reduce swelling.

**Diet:**

After pharyngeal flap it will not be unusual for your child to refuse to drink or eat. He or she may complain of a bad sore throat. Controlling your child’s pain is important so that they will be willing to drink and eat. Clear liquids are offered first for 2 days. You then you can progress to regular liquids and soft pureed foods that will not catch on the sutures. During the hospital stay, the nurses will monitor your child’s intake and output closely. Follow this diet for 3 weeks after repair. Use cup or spoon with meals. Arrange dietary consult as needed. Your child will do best and heal faster if he or she has a good healthy diet and is drinking well. You may need to feed your child more frequently as the soft diet may not satisfy his or her hunger as a regular diet with solid foods. Drooling may be seen 1-2 weeks after surgery. This is normal. Offer liquids frequently to replace fluids lost.

**Reasons to Call:**

Continuous bright red bleeding from the mouth Temperature of 101.5 or above (Fevers less than 100.5 degrees are not uncommon after surgery. If a fever persists or is greater than 100.5 degrees, call your doctor. Do not take oral temperature.) Difficulty swallowing several days after the surgery Pain that is not tolerable after taking pain medication Inability to urinate within 6 hours of leaving the hospital

**myMedStar Patient Portal**

**myMedStar** is a free, secure and convenient way to manage your health care and communicate with your physician.  
  
**With myMedStar you can:**  
● Request and view upcoming appointments  
● View most lab, radiology and pathology results as soon as they are available  
● Renew prescriptions  
● Exchange secure email messages with any of your MedStar Health care providers  
● View summaries of your hospital or office visits  
● And more  
  
**How to Enroll:**  
  
**Self-enrollment**  
1. Go to *myMedstar.org*  
2. Click **Enroll Now**  
3. Follow the instructions to enroll. You will need:  
  
● First and last name  
● Date of birth  
● Email address or this **PatientID - Your unique patient ID appears on page one of your discharge paperwork**

**Email Invitation:**  
  
If you provided an email address during registration you should have received an invitation to enroll in the myMedStar patient portal.  
  
● From within the invitation, click the link to accept the invitation.  
● After successful verification, you will be prompted to create your account. Follow the onscreen instructions to complete the enrollment process.  
  
MedStar Health is dedicated to helping improve your overall health care experience by providing convenient, streamlined resources to help you better manage your health. We now offer the ability for you to securely connect some of the health management apps you may use(i.e. fitness trackers, dietary trackers, etc.) to your health record. Email us at mymedstar@medstar.net if you are interested. Once we receive your request, MedStar Health will work with the appropriate vendors to determine if they meet the technical requirements in order to establish a secure connection.  
  
If you have questions or need assistance creating your account, please contact myMedStar support toll free at 1-877-745-5656, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.