**FAQ’s AFTER CLEFT LIP OR PALATE SURGERY**

**Q: What are normal, expected post-operative changes after cleft lip/palate surgery?**

**A:** It is normal to have: some fussiness, which responds to pain medication/feeding, blood-tinged saliva, some swelling of the upper lip and cheeks (cleft lip), poor sleeping for about the first week after surgery, constipation from the pain medication.

**Q: What warning signs should I be looking out for after cleft lip or palate surgery?**

**A:** Please call if your baby has any of the following: temperature > 101.5 oF, redness/warmth (cleft lip), significant drainage of pus or blood, inconsolable (pain not adequately controlled with pain medication), diarrhea, poor feeding with decreased urine output (signs of dehydration).

**Q: When can I bathe my baby?**

**A:** You may give your baby a bath the first day after surgery. For cleft lips, try not to get the dressing on the lip too wet. Blot dry gently.

**Q: What happens if the steri-strips fall off or the nasal stents fall out (cleft lip)?**

**A:** Steri-strips often fall off due to moisture that is inevitable as your baby feeds. Simply apply another steri-strip to the upper lip incision. If the nasal stents fall out, do not panic. There is nothing to do.

**Q: When does my baby need to wear the no-no’s (arm restraints)?**

**A.**  All the time when you are not holding them. Try to keep them on as much as possible – removing them only for bathing. After cleft lip repair, these stay on one week. After cleft palate repair, the no-no’s are worn for two weeks.

**Q: Can my baby take a pacifier?**

**A:** Preferably, no.

**Q: What can my baby eat after surgery?**

**A:** After cleft lip repair, there is no change in their diet. They may breastfeed (if they were able to do that before surgery), or take a bottle. After cleft palate repair, babies may take liquid through a sippy cup (without the ball valve) or syringe (bottle as a last resort). They may also eat all level 1 baby foods.

**Q: When do I start doing scar management for the lip scar?**

**A:** Dr. Wood will discuss scar massage and scar care at the first postoperative appointment. Until then, nothing to do.

**Q: What can I give for constipation?**

**A:** Prune juice works well.