

# Getting Ready for Surgery

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Written by your Child Life Specialist Team



Dear Caregivers,

This book was written with patients of all ages in mind. We care for children from the first day of their lives, into their teenage years, and for a variety of reasons. Therefore, some of this may not directly apply to you and your family.

Children as early as 2 ½ or 3 can understand simple phrases such as “helping your ears feel better”, and we encourage honest, clear communication with your child. This gives them the opportunity to ask questions, discuss their feelings and have a general understanding of what will happen to their body. It can be challenging as a caregiver to express this information without feeling like you’re overwhelming your child. The goal of this book is to support you in doing just that.

You know your child best, and we encourage you to use what you feel will be most helpful to your child. If you have more questions about preparing yourself or your child for surgery, please call our Child Life Specialists, listed by location below:

**Downtown**

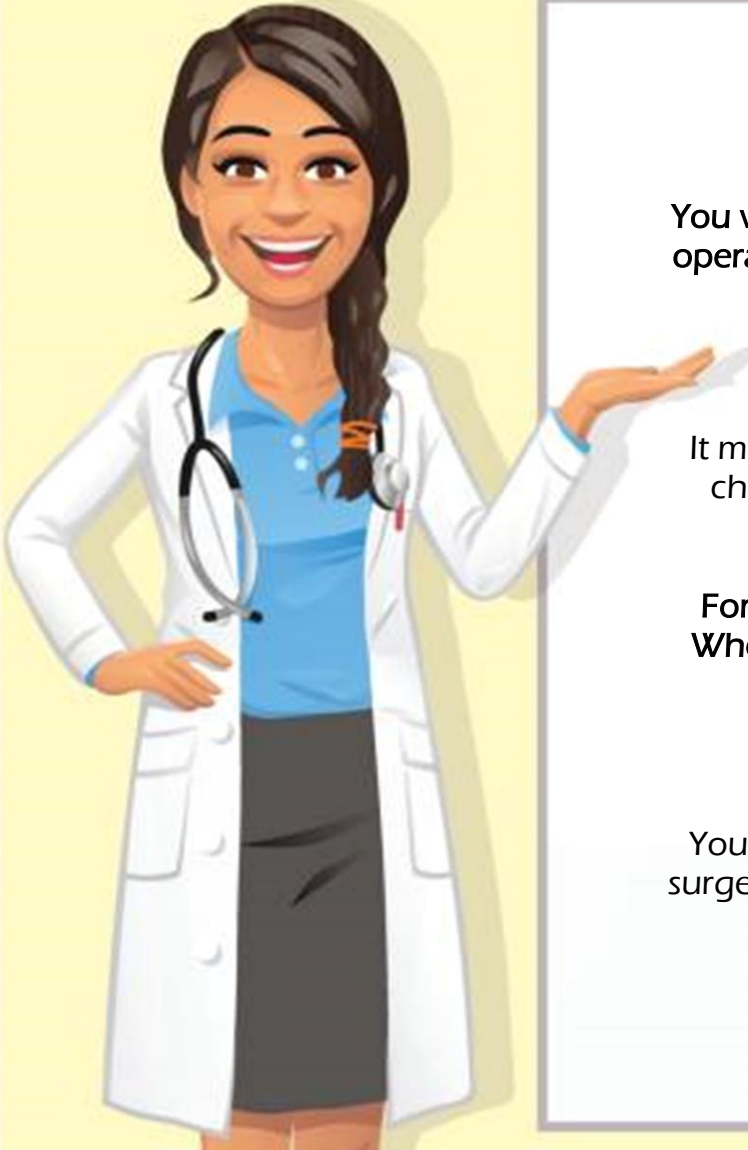
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Hello!

You will be having a surgery, a procedure or an operation soon. Those words can all be used to mean the same thing.

It means that a doctor, we call a surgeon, will check or fix something in or on your body.

For this book, we will use the word surgery. When you talk about it at home, you can use the word you like best.

You might have a lot of questions about your surgery day, so keep reading to learn what your day will be like!

# Nervous is Normal



It is normal to feel nervous, scared or anxious before you come in for a surgery.

Anyone, even people that work in hospitals every single day, would feel nervous if it was their surgery!

The people taking care of you are very good at their jobs and are very good at taking care of kids like you. You can ask anyone any question at any time!

There are the 3 different buildings where kids can have procedures!



These buildings are in different places all over Illinois!

Where are you going to have your surgery?

# Rules for Eating and Drinking Before Surgery

The hospital will call your family the day before your surgery some rules you will be asked to follow.

## The Rules:

- The hospital will call your family and tell you what time your surgery time will be.
- 8 hours before your surgery time, you must stop eating any kind of food. You can have clear liquids like apple juice, water or Gatorade until 2 hours before your surgery time.
- 2 hours before your surgery time, you must stop drinking.

It is very important you follow these rules about when to stop eating and drinking. Having a surgery when there is food or drink in your belly can be dangerous. The time the hospital tells your family that you should stop eating and drinking is to make sure your belly is totally empty before you have surgery.

Being hungry can be very hard. We will have treats to share with you after your surgery once the doctor says it is safe to eat and drink again. Can you make a list of things that you can do to keep your brain busy before you come to the hospital? It is helpful to make a list of these things before the day comes. These can be things like reading stories, playing games, or coloring. What do you like to do?

# Getting Ready to Go



A great way to help your family is to help pack your bag the night before surgery. You can choose what you want to wear to the hospital, what you want to bring with you, and what you want to do after your surgery is all done. If you have a special lovie, book or blanket that you love, you can bring it with you to surgery, too.

What will you bring with you? You can draw or write your list here.

Make my list:

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Draw my stuff:

A large, empty rectangular box with a green border, intended for a child to draw their items.



# When You Get Here

You will probably wait a little while in the waiting room. A nurse will call your name and will take you to a room called a pre-op room that looks like one of the pictures below. Pre-op means pre-operation, or before surgery.

Once you are in your pre-op room, you can watch a movie, play with some of the hospital's toys or read books while you wait.

You'll get hospital pajamas to change into so that your clothes from home stay clean. We also have toasty warm blankets to share!



Downtown



Northbrook



Westchester



# Your Surgery Team

## 1. Nursing Assistants and Nurses

- A nursing assistant will come see how tall you are, how much you weigh, and will check your vital signs. This means taking your temperature, listening to your lungs and listening to your heartbeat. None of this will hurt you.
- The nurse will ask your family a lot of questions about your health, will help you put on a bracelet we call an ID band (this has your name and birthday on it), will teach your family more about surgery day, and will answer questions for you and your family.



## 2. The Anesthesia Team

- Anesthesia is the name of the medicine that makes sure you do not feel anything during your procedure. The Anesthesia (ann-ess-THEE-shuh) Team is made up of doctors called anesthesiologists, one kind of nurse called an Advance Practice Registered Nurse or an APRN and nurses called Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists that we call CRNAs. They work together on keeping you asleep, safe and comfortable during surgery.



## 3. Surgeons

- A surgeon is a doctor that will be doing your surgery. She or he will come talk to your family about the procedure. The surgeon will have an adult who cares for you sign a consent form. This is a grown-up permission slip that says your family knows that surgery is happening and they say it is okay for it to happen. You also might meet someone called a resident or a fellow. These are the surgeon's helpers during your surgery.



## 4. Child Life Specialists

- Child Life Specialists help make being in the hospital easier by teaching you about what happens when you come visit. They teach you in a way that is not scary and will make sense to you. They answer your questions and figure out ways help you feel less nervous before your surgery.

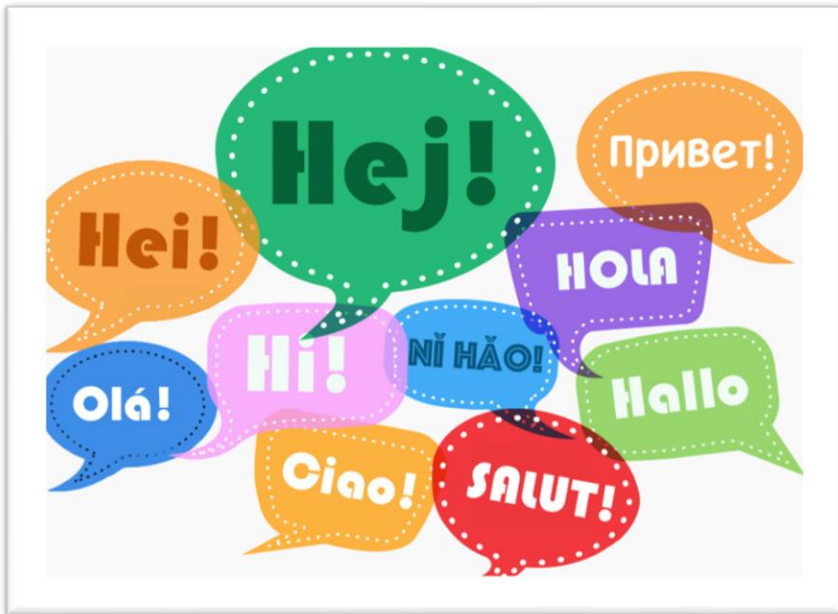
# We Speak Your Language!

Many families who come to Lurie Children's speak languages besides English.

We have helpers called *Interpreters* that speak the language you speak at home. They help make sure everyone feels comfortable and understood when they are at the hospital.

Sometimes Interpreters may come into your room to help; and other times we call them through a computer or phone.

This can be available to you and your family even if you speak and understand English. You or someone from your family can ask your nurse to call the Interpreter at any time.



**Caregiver Note:** It is part of the Patient and Family Bill of Rights for us to talk to you, AND for you to talk to us in the language you speak at home and are most comfortable with.

Please let your doctor's office and surgery staff know if you need an Interpreter.

# What are those matching outfits everyone is wearing?

You may see people in matching pants and shirts that look like pajamas.  
We call these outfits scrubs.

Scrubs are washed by the hospital and everyone taking care of you gets a new pair every day so that they are as clean as can be while they take care of you.

That's also why you may see people wearing a mask over their noses and mouths, and why they wear gloves.



Scrubs



Mask



Gloves

You and your family can ask any of your helpers any questions you have.

Here is some space for you to write down your questions so you don't forget!

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

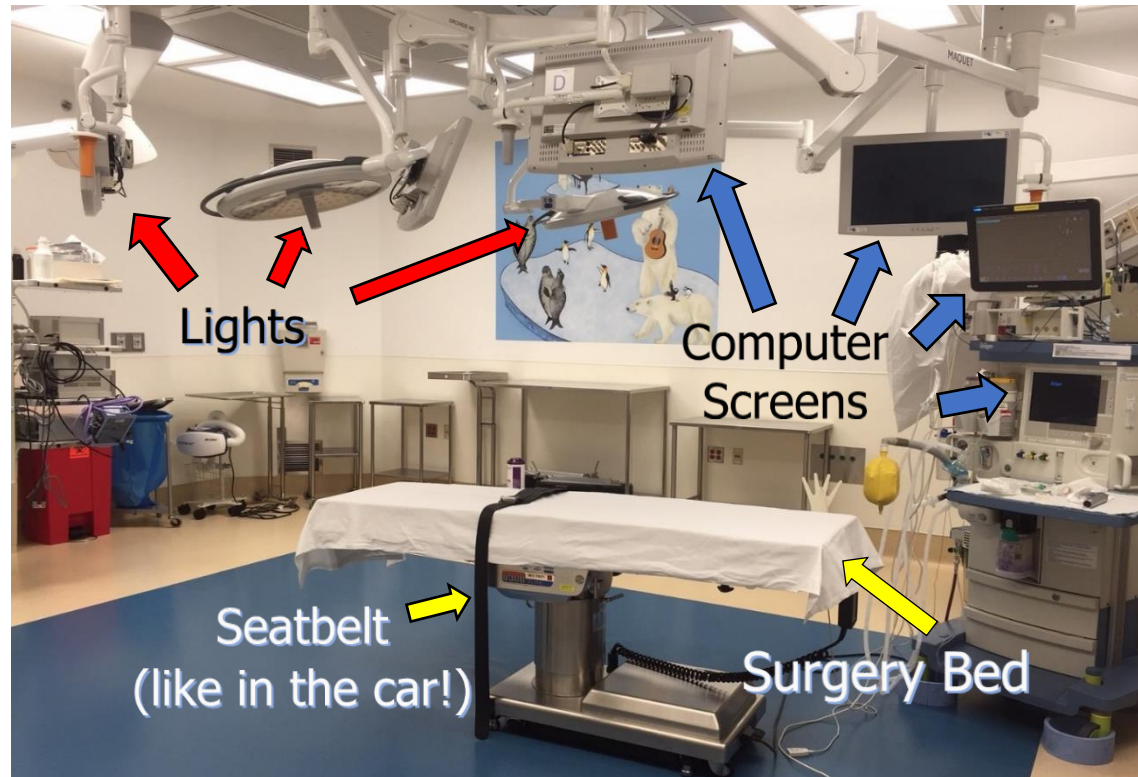


**Caregiver Note:** We know that kids can sometimes surprise you with the questions they ask.

We encourage honest, truthful communication, but we don't expect you to have all the answers. We support you answering, "I don't know", and letting your child know you will learn together from their doctor or nurse.

You can help model a trusting relationship with medical staff by writing down questions to ask at the hospital.

## Time for Surgery!



**Can you find the things on this list in this picture?**

2 dancing seals

A guitar

6 clean tables

A red trash can

Polar Bears

A blue trash can

When it is time for surgery, we will say “see you soon!” to your family. While you ride on your bed to the Operating Room, they will go to get the treats for after your surgery. You can bring your favorite stuffed animal or blanket with you!

The red arrows point to the big circle lights like you may have seen at your dentist’s office. These won’t turn on until after you’re asleep. The computer screens will help the doctors and nurses keep you safe while you sleep by telling them about your breathing and your heartbeat.

The bed in the middle may look different from your bed at home, but this will be where you sleep during surgery. The seatbelt will work like it does in the car where it goes snugly over your lap to keep you safely on the bed while you sleep.

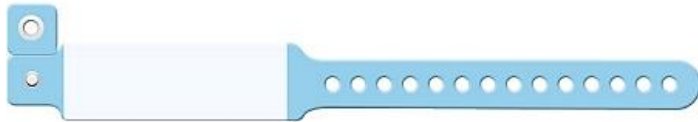
# When you get to the surgery room, you will do 4 things!

## 4 steps for safety:

1. Some kids will move to a new bed. Some kids will stay on the bed they rode on to the Operating Room.  
Remember, your lovie can be with you the whole time!



2. The nurse in the Operating Room will check the bracelet on your wrist that has your name and your birthday.



3. They will put a sticker on your finger that wraps like a bandaid, 3 stickers on your chest and a white wrap around your arm. These are called monitors and they help the doctors and nurses keep you safe while you sleep.



4. They will give you a mask that covers your nose, mouth and chin. You will get to choose a flavor for the inside of this mask! You will breathe the anesthesia medicine through this mask. This medicine will make you feel relaxed at first and then you will fall all the way to sleep. This process takes about 30 seconds to 1 minute.

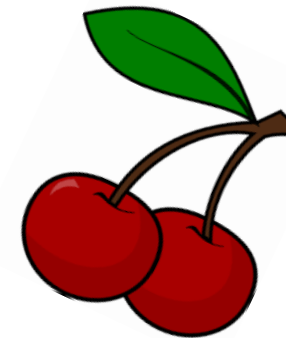
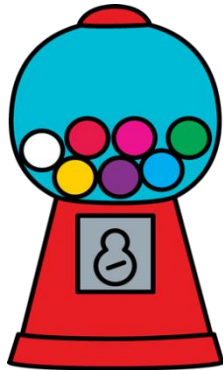




# Anesthesia Mask

Some kids will get their anesthesia through a mask. The mask will touch the top of their nose, their cheeks and their chin. It will feel squishy like a balloon where it touches their face. The anesthesiologist will attach a long tube to the mask that puts the sleep medicine into the mask.

You get to choose a flavor for your sleep medicine! There are lots of flavors you can choose from like strawberries, cherries, oranges and bubblegum. You can ask your medical team which ones you can choose from on your procedure day.



The anesthesia team will make sure you stay asleep the whole time, but not any longer than you need to. They make sure you are safe every single second that you are in the operating room. If you're feeling nervous about wearing the mask, you can talk to your anesthesiologist about other ways to go to sleep.



# Having an IV

Lots of kids will need an IV during surgery. An IV is a small plastic straw that lays inside one of the blue lines in your hand or arm called your veins. The IV is shorter than your pinky finger and skinnier than a piece of spaghetti. It feels rubbery and bendy. It will not hurt after it is in your arm.

The IV will deliver medicine to your body through your veins. This medicine works quickly to make feelings like pain or having to throw up go away.

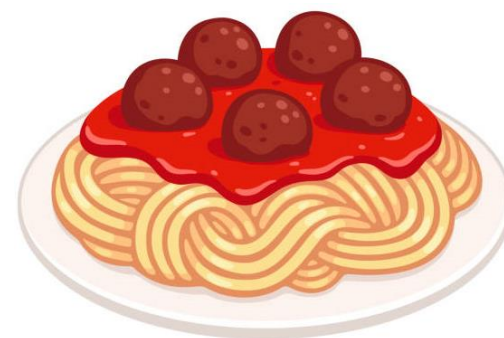
The IV helps the nurse give you medicine without you having to drink anything that tastes yucky. Some kids will have this IV put in after they go to sleep with the mask. Some kids will need the IV before they go to sleep. Some kids choose to have an IV put in instead of wearing the mask.



There are lots of ways to make putting in an IV very easy, and without causing a lot of pain. You and your family can talk to the anesthesia team about what their plan is for you. They will be able to tell you when your IV will be placed.

It is normal to feel nervous about having an IV placed. Remember, we are all here to help make this as easy as it can be!

**Caregiver Note:** The medical team prioritizes the safety and comfort of your child. The anesthesia care plan will be based on the unique needs of your child. If your child is concerned about having an IV placed, we encourage you to remind them that doctors and nurses do not want to hurt them and are going to do what is safest for them. Remind them that feelings like being scared or nervous are normal and that your job as their caregiver is to keep them safe and help them be brave.



# Time to Wake Up!



When your surgery is done, you may wake up in a room that looks like this called the PACU ("PACK-you").

You may also wake up in a room that looks like the room you started in.

When you wake up, it may feel like you were asleep for less than 5 minutes. That is a normal feeling to have after you have anesthesia.

We will get your family back together as soon as possible once your surgery is done.

It is normal to feel sleepy, dizzy, uncomfortable or even sick to your stomach when you wake up. It's also normal to have a sore throat. The nurses and doctors will be there to help.

## Overnight Stays- Main Hospital Only

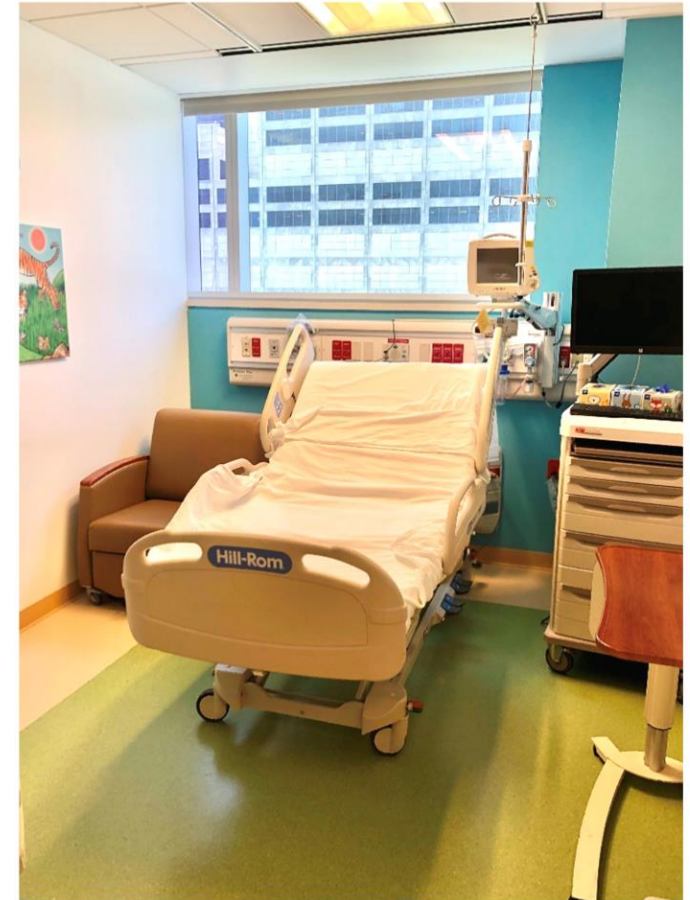
Sometimes kids have to have a sleepover at the hospital after surgery. This is because the doctors and nurses need to make sure it is safe for you to go home – and they can do that once they see how you feel after one night of sleep.

Kids who stay overnight get to have one adult from their family stay with them at the hospital.

There is a chair next to the big bed that can change into another bed. That's where the adult who is staying with you who will sleep.

We have lots of toys to play with, movies to watch, and fun activities for you to do while you're staying with us.

You can also pack things from home to bring – those are good things to put on the list from the beginning of this book!



## Almost Time to Go Home!

The doctors and nurses will wait to make sure you are feeling comfortable and then they will send you and your family home. Remember, it is normal to have a little sore throat or pain in your body after surgery. It is also normal to feel tired. The IV we talked about will help give you medicine to make you feel all better.

The nurse will gently take the IV out when you don't need it anymore. You will feel a sticky bandage come off your skin, but the IV coming out will not hurt. Remember, it is a bendy piece of plastic (not a needle) that stays to give you drinks of medicine.

Sometimes the doctor will have an adult in your family give you medicine for a few days after surgery to help you heal. This is called a prescription. It is important to take your medicine so that you heal back to your normal self. Your doctor or nurse will tell your family how much medicine you will need to take and when you need to take it. Even if you feel completely better before your medicine is all done, you will need to make sure you finish all the doses.

Can you think of some questions you may have for your doctors or nurses before you go home?  
Write them in the space below:

# You are a Superstar!

At the end of your surgery day, you will feel proud of yourself for being so brave!

We already know how amazing you are, and we are ready to take amazing care of you and your family.

Check out the next two pages of this book to fill out your Surgery Day Plan and to fill out The Feelings Chart!

We'll see you real soon!



It can be helpful to think about what will help you feel relaxed on your surgery day before the day arrives. You can fill out the “My Surgery Day Plan” with your family’s help so that you are ready to go when you come in!

## My Surgery Day Plan

Plan for your surgery day visit and share it with your surgery team!

On my Surgery Day, I will bring:

- My Favorite Book:

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- My Favorite Toy:

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- Something else:

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While we wait for my surgery, I will:

- Read a book
- Play a game
- Draw, color or read
- Watch TV
- Something else:

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As I am falling asleep, I would like to:

- Listen to music
- See how high I can count before I fall asleep
- Tell my surgery team a joke
- Pick out what I want to dream
- Hear a silly story

While I’m in surgery, my family will:

- Read a book
- Talk to each other
- Play a game
- Do something else:

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## My Surgery Day Feelings

It can be really helpful to talk about the feelings you have about your surgery day. Your surgery team wants to make sure your body is healthy, but healthy feelings are very important, too! Fill out the list below with feeling words and share this with your surgery team.

### Before we go to the hospital, I will feel:

Nervous	Excited	Happy	Confused	Glad	Scared		
	Hungry	Curious	Brave	Worried	Silly	Shy	Mad
Tired	Proud	Thirsty	Surprised	Good	Quiet	Anxious	

*Other feeling names:*

### When we are the hospital, I will feel:

Nervous	Excited	Happy	Confused	Glad	Scared		
	Hungry	Curious	Brave	Worried	Silly	Shy	Mad
Tired	Proud	Thirsty	Surprised	Good	Quiet	Anxious	

*Other feeling names:*

### After my surgery is all done, I will feel:

Nervous	Excited	Happy	Confused	Glad	Scared		
	Hungry	Curious	Brave	Worried	Silly	Shy	Mad
Tired	Proud	Thirsty	Surprised	Good	Quiet	Anxious	

*Other feeling names:*



All,  
for  
your  
one.®

