

Rendia

Mastering Pediatric Appointments: A Guide for ENT Doctors



Tips for managing your littlest patients and their parents with **empathy and expertise**.

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Rendia's interactive technology helps practices drive higher patient satisfaction scores, save time in patient consultations and improve conversion rates for elective procedures.

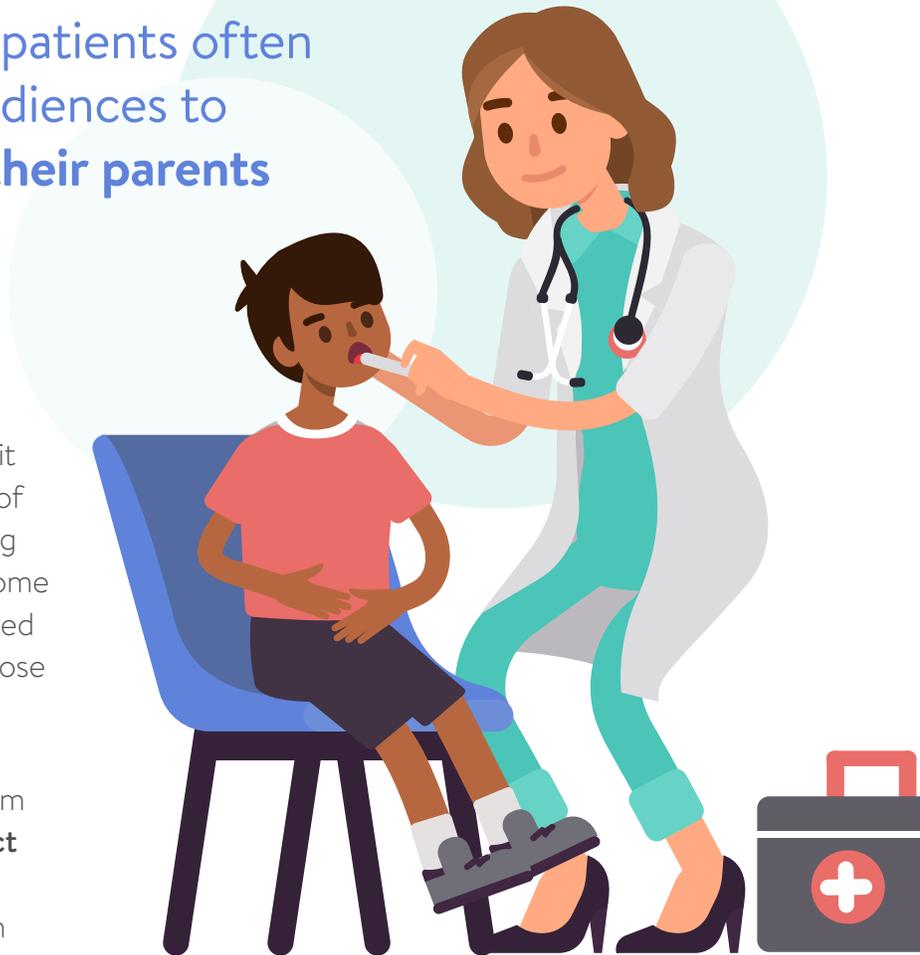
Delivering Successful Pediatric Care for **Years to Come**

Working with pediatric patients often means you have two audiences to educate: **children and their parents and other caregivers.**

You encounter the whole range of **parent personalities**, from the parent who doesn't know what "ENT" stands for to the parent who comes to the visit with printed articles and a bulleted list of questions. Some parents express strong opinions about their child's care, and some feel anxious, confused, and overwhelmed by different treatment options—and those types aren't even mutually exclusive.

When the time comes to enter the exam room, **children often absorb and reflect their parents' emotions and perceived anxiety**, so you might find yourself with two squirmy, nervous humans.

Being a doctor means navigating valid parental concerns and applying your medical expertise with empathy. What does this look like when it comes to your youngest patients?



This whitepaper will offer pro-tips for answering FAQs from parents and demonstrate how family-centered care can pave the way for patient relationships that last a lifetime. »

Fast Stats in Pediatric Otolaryngology



IN 2011 ALONE
7.5mil

children were treated for otitis media

AN AVERAGE OF \$427
was spent per-child
for the treatment

60%

of children experience
acute otitis media by
the age of 5

14.9%

of children between ages
6-19 experience low or high
frequency hearing loss



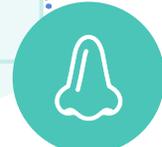
93%

of their parents stated that
they want more information

the majority of those preferred
a **TECHNOLOGY-BASED**
mode of information delivery

20%

of otolaryngology
patients are younger
than 15 years old



6-13%

of children experience
one case of acute sinusitis
by the age of 3

9.5%

of otolaryngologists
specialize in pediatric
otolaryngology

Meeting the Parents

Any parent with the power of Google at their fingertips is bound to find endless articles about pediatric otolaryngology conditions online. In one study of parental knowledge following surgical consultations for their children, **56.5% of parents stated that their primary source of information pre-appointment was the Internet.**

Each parent comes to your office with different expectations and questions. Combining pre-appointment education with the usage of technology can work to your advantage to address their various concerns about your patient.



From Patient Satisfaction to Parent Satisfaction

According to a study evaluating responses from parents of children seen by pediatric surgical doctors, **parents value doctors' interpersonal behavior and technical skills most highly**, measuring these dimensions by perceived empathy for patients' needs, adequate explanations of treatments, and responses to questions.

“In pediatric care,” the authors say, **“patient satisfaction is truly a measure of parent experience rather than the child’s experience** because parents complete the evaluations and make medical decisions on behalf of or as proxies for their children.”

Parents may not be able to evaluate your surgical skills, but they are keenly aware of your interpersonal behaviors, which are instrumental forces in determining their satisfaction with care.

Moreover, interpersonal components of communication can differ by income, language barriers, and health literacy levels. In families from low-income environments, **parents are more likely to report poor communication with health providers.** Proactively answering questions can make a huge difference in how you are perceived by parents and caregivers.

Parent FAQs Guide: How to Respond

Will the procedure cure my child? Are there any alternatives?

Although the patient has been referred to you for surgery, take a moment to **explain the bigger picture treatment options**. If appropriate, advise parents of the possibility of repeating the procedure.

Will this procedure be painful for my child?

Set realistic expectations about recovery, so that parents can care for the child without anxiety.

*Counsel parents on appropriate post-operative pain relievers (ex: acetaminophen versus ibuprofen) and for what duration. **Make sure they know not to give young children aspirin.***

What should I bring to the visit?

Ask your front office staff to remind parents of new patients to bring along any X-rays, CT scans, or previous lab work to **expedite the consultation process**.

How can I help prepare my child for surgery?

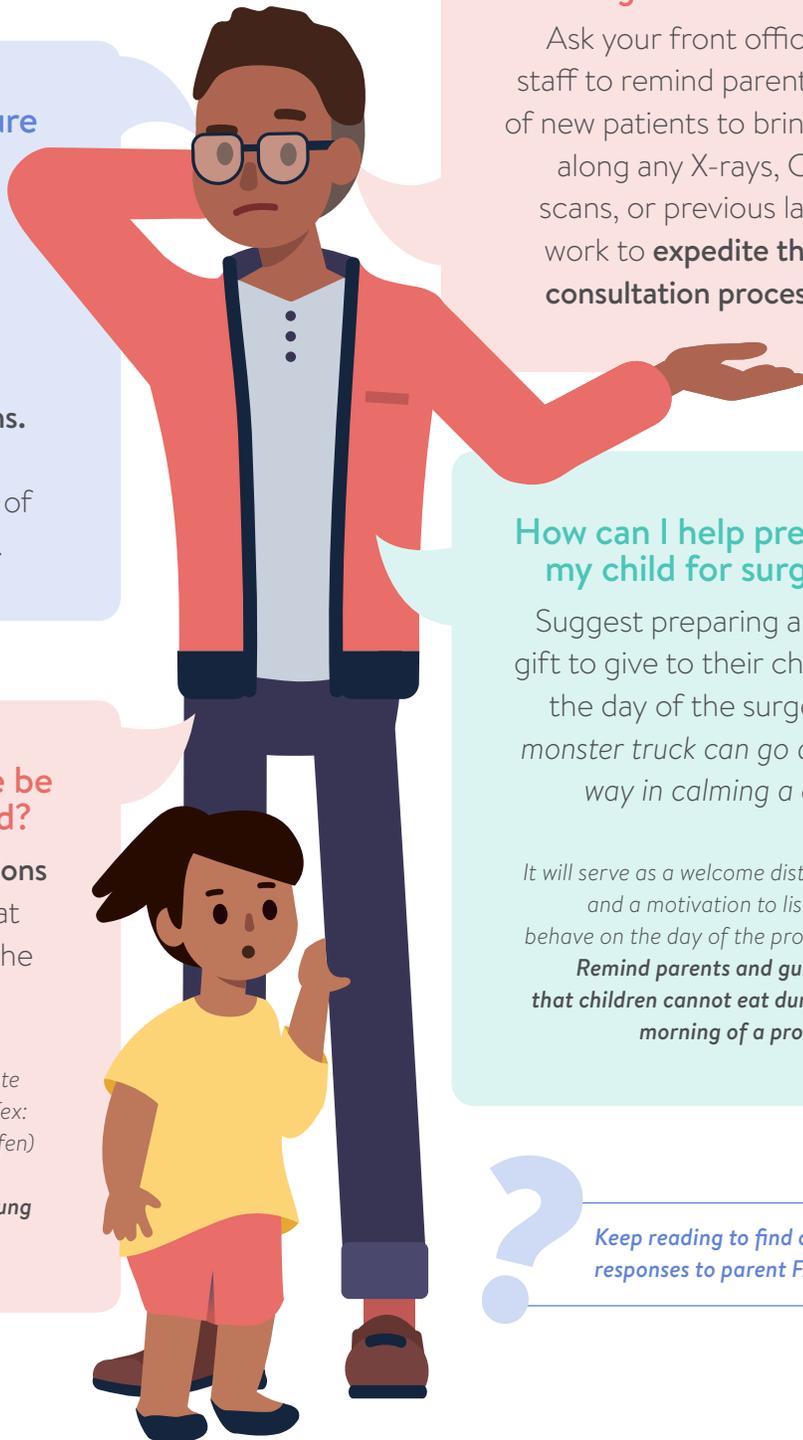
Suggest preparing a small gift to give to their child on the day of the surgery (a monster truck can go a long way in calming a child).

It will serve as a welcome distraction and a motivation to listen and behave on the day of the procedure.

Remind parents and guardians that children cannot eat during the morning of a procedure.



Keep reading to find out more responses to parent FAQs. »



Will my child be put under anesthesia? Can I be there when they wake up?

Let parents know who will be with their child post-procedure and when they can soothe them in the recovery room.

Remind parents that all children can respond differently to anesthesia, and may feel nauseous, irritable, weepy, or sleepy, but these reactions are not a cause for concern.

What will happen after my child's surgery?

Set expectations for follow-up care, and explain whether parents will return to you or their pediatrician.

*Take a moment to explain possible side effects of particular medications. For example, caution parents that prednisone may cause sleep disturbances, but **it is important for the child to take the full course of prescribed medications.***



Will my child need special food during recovery?

If there are restrictions during the recovery period, such as not drinking with a straw, advise parents to purchase sippy cups in advance to ease children into post-op routines comfortably.

*If dehydration is a concern, suggest that parents **stock up on the child's favorite drinks** (diluted fruit juice, Pedialyte®, etc.) to encourage drinking.*



What else do you treat?

Seize this opportunity to establish a lasting relationship by highlighting your other services, such as frenectomy, hearing tests, allergy treatments, and diagnosis of sleep disorders.

Family-Centered Care in Just 5 Steps

How you communicate is just as important as what you communicate.

Make it a priority to form a partnership with the parent to help mitigate the child's worries and fears.

When you are the first to create space for their questions and concerns, you will establish a foundation for trust and confidence in your recommendations.



1 EMPOWER both your child patients and their parents or guardians with options.

✓ Focus on building rapport with your young patients by giving them the power to control small decisions.

- For example, ask the child, “Would you like me to examine your right or left ear first?”

✓ Give parents a thorough view of their child's treatment options.

- Help parents weigh the risks of anesthesia and surgery against the downsides of frequent antibiotic use.

2 ENGAGE & CALM them in the waiting room in preparation for the exam.

✓ Orient the patient and parent to anatomy with relevant videos or narrated animations, whether you're performing a pediatric balloon sinuplasty, explaining the side effects of tonsil removal, or illustrating a child's Eustachian tube.

✓ Reduce children's confusion and diffuse misconceptions with age-appropriate educational content and entertaining trivia.

Family-Centered Care in Just 5 Steps Cont'd



3 CONNECT parents with verified support networks, community resources, and info on their child's condition with calls and emails.

- ✓ Include a video or two that they can share with other family members and loved ones.

4 TRAIN your staff to offer pre-op orientations and tours to acclimate patients and parents to the environment and set expectations.

- ✓ Providing toys for children and medical information for parents is significantly associated with reducing children's anxiety throughout the treatment process.

5 UNDERSTAND the full health environment of your patient and treat the whole person accordingly.

- ✓ Lifestyle factors—like the effects of secondhand smoke from a family member—can increase the likelihood of health complications for the child.
 - *By being attentive to the child's environment and encouraging healthy behaviors for everyone, you can be a positive influence in the health of the whole family.*

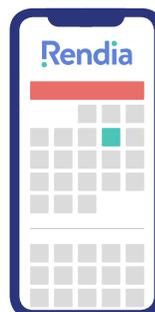
Long-Lasting Patient Relationships



While practicing these strategies makes your day-to-day interaction with children and families easier, it also contributes to the **long-term growth and continued success of your practice**. Providing ‘cradle-to-grave’ care ensures that relationships beginning in pediatrics return value over many years of continued care.

Providing empathetic care to first-time pediatric patients and their families will position you as their go-to provider for conditions affecting other family members. **Between appointments, use digital communication** to share information and reminders with parents, and make them aware of all the services you offer along the care continuum.

This doesn't mean you'll never face another screaming child in your exam room, but we hope that these tips prepare you to mitigate those moments with confidence and patience. **Establish yourself as a future resource**, and the next time a parent has a question about allergies or ear infections, they'll know exactly who to call. [R](#)



[Schedule a Demo Today >>](#)

See how Rendia's video-based tools can complement your pediatric patient engagement strategy to make families long-term promoters of your practice.