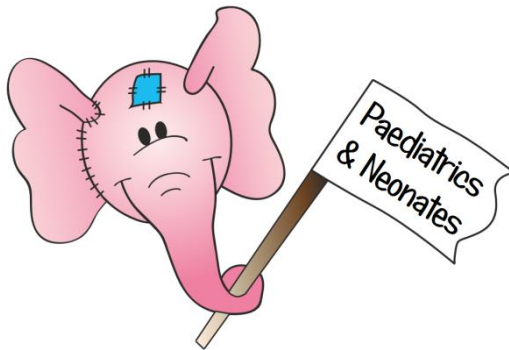


# Pain management after surgery

## Children's Surgery

### Information for families



### Introduction

This leaflet is for parents/carers of a child who is having surgery. It gives information on the different types of pain relief your child may be given during and after their operation, and how you can help them when you leave hospital.

If you have any queries, you can call the Children's Ward on **01384 244271** (available 24 hours).

## **Pain relief after your child's operation**

When your child is allowed home after surgery, we would not expect them to be in a great deal of pain. This is why many smaller procedures are carried out as a day case procedure, meaning your child only has to be in hospital for the day.

The anaesthetist will give some pain medicine to your child while they are asleep. This should work to relieve pain for several hours and usually means that your child will be comfortable when they wake up.

The anaesthetist may also give your child a local anaesthetic block whilst they are asleep. A local anaesthetic block is where the doctors inject some local anaesthetic around the area of the operation whilst your child is asleep. This will numb your child's wound for six to eight hours and help keep them comfortable after the operation.

If your child does experience any pain after their operation, the following information will help you to decide what to do next.

**Please buy some pain relief medicine for your child before they have their operation so you have it ready.**

## **How can I tell if my child is in pain?**

If your child is old enough, they will be able to tell you that they are in pain. It is more difficult to judge in younger children but his or her behaviour can help you. Signs of pain include crying or moaning, refusal to eat or play, being quieter than usual or wanting to be close to you more.

## How can I help make my child's pain better?

Remember that after surgery:

- Painkillers should be given regularly for the first two days after surgery, especially if the pain is bad.
- Different types of painkiller work well together; for instance, paracetamol and ibuprofen can be given at the same time for the strongest effect.
- Do not wait for the pain to get very bad before you give your child painkillers.
- Giving painkillers at bedtime will help your child to sleep through the night.
- If your child is still in pain, or you are concerned at how bad their pain is, you should contact the Children's Ward for advice on 01384 244271.

## Non-drug methods of pain relief

These can help get rid of pain and reduce the amount of pain your child experiences. They can be used alongside regular pain medicine:

- **Distraction:** help your child to concentrate on something other than their pain. Toys, jokes, games, books, iPads, films and DVDs or the television can all be helpful.
- **Relaxation:** simple techniques like deep breathing, rhythmically moving a leg or loosening a fist can relax other body parts and dramatically reduce pain.
- **Massage and touch** can be used to help your child to relax and be more comfortable.

## Types of pain medicines for children

There are two main types of pain medicine suitable for children: **paracetamol and ibuprofen. They can be given at the same time.** More details about these are given in the following table:

Medicine name	What is it?	Side effects
<b>Paracetamol</b> <b>Also known as brand names:</b> Calpol® Plus Disprol® Infadrops® Tixymol® Tixyplus® Medinol®	<p>Paracetamol is a mild painkiller and is available under various brand names.</p> <p>It can be given every four to six hours.</p> <p>Paracetamol works well in combination with ibuprofen. It can also be used to bring down a child's temperature.</p>	<p>Very rarely, a child may develop a rash and other reactions. If this happens, stop giving the medicine and tell your GP.</p> <p>Paracetamol can be harmful if too much is taken (overdose), so do not give more than the prescribed amount, either as a single dose, or during any 24 hour period.</p> <p>There are other types of medicines containing paracetamol, such as cold relief medicines, so it is important to count these in any doses given in a 24 hour period.</p>

<b>Medicine name</b>	<b>What is it?</b>	<b>Side effects</b>
<p><b>Ibuprofen</b>  <b>Also known as brand names:</b>  Nurofen®  Junifen®  Brufen®  Cuprofen®  Advil®</p>	<p>Ibuprofen is a painkiller that is particularly useful after operations as it reduces inflammation, as well as reducing pain. It is a type of medicine called a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID).</p> <p><b>If your child has asthma, get advice from the Children’s Ward or your GP before giving them ibuprofen.</b></p> <p>Ibuprofen can be given every six to eight hours.</p> <p>Ibuprofen works well in combination with paracetamol. It can also be used to bring down a child’s temperature.</p>	<p>The most common side effects of ibuprofen are slight diarrhoea or slight tummy ache.</p> <p>Some children have a mild allergic reaction to ibuprofen, developing an itchy rash, unexplained wheezing, worsening of any asthma or shortness of breath.</p> <p>If your child shows any signs of an allergic reaction, stop giving the medicine and tell your GP.</p> <p>Problems due to overdose of ibuprofen are rare, but if you give your child more than the recommended amount, you should contact your GP as soon as possible.</p>

Further details about paracetamol, ibuprofen and any other medicines are written on the patient information leaflet inside the packet, or you can ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

Children's Ward (ward C2) on 01384 244271 (available 24 hours)

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

**This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:**

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/paediatrics-and-neonatology/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email [dgft.patient.information@nhs.net](mailto:dgft.patient.information@nhs.net)

**This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.**

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Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

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Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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