

What are the possible side effects?

Side effects from painkillers are not common and are described in the leaflet inside the medicine box. It is very important to read this leaflet to ensure you give the right dose at the right time. Your child will feel much better and happier when he/she is not in pain.

Types of pain medicines for children

Paracetamol Next due at:

Also known as Calpol®, Calpol Six Plus®, Disprol®, Panadol® and Paralink®.

What is it?

A mild painkiller.

The effects are short lasting and it can be given every 4- 6 hours not exceeding 4 doses in 24 hours. Paracetamol works well in combination with ibuprofen.

Side effects

Are very rare

Paracetamol can be harmful if too much is taken so never give more than the prescribed amount.



Ibuprofen Next due at:

Also known as Nurofen®, Brufen® or Calprofen®.

What is it?

A pain killer. It also reduces inflammation so it is very effective for pain after operations.

It is longer lasting than paracetamol.

It can be given every 6-8 hours not exceed 3 doses in 24 hours.

Side effects

The most common side effect is slight diarrhoea or mild tummy ache so it is advisable to give it with food. Some children have a mild reaction to ibuprofen developing an itchy rash, unexplained wheezing or worsening of any asthma. If this happens stop the medication and inform your doctor.



If you have any queries about managing your child’s pain at home please do not hesitate to contact the Nurses’ Station on Beech Ward

at
4142160.

Patient Information Leaflet

Managing your Child’s pain at home



THE ADELAIDE & MEATH HOSPITAL, DUBLIN
INCORPORATING THE NATIONAL CHILDRENS HOSPITAL

Statement of Values

Respect - Caring -
Openness - Partnership -
Teamwork Fairness &
Equality

Pain Management After Surgery

My child has had an operation, what should we expect when we get home?

Your child will have received painkillers when he or she was in the hospital, **but these will wear off** when you get home. Your child may therefore experience different types of pain:

Pain at the site of operation:

This pain is sometimes quite sore. If your child has been given a local anaesthetic injection when he/she was asleep, he/she may not have any pain at first. When the local anaesthetic wears off, he/she may begin to feel pain. You may have to use different types of painkillers together to make it better.

Other general aches and pains such as sore throat or headache:

These are common just after an operation. They should be mild, easily treated with paracetamol, and go away within the first 24 hours.

What can I do to make my child's pain better?

The nurses and/or doctors will advise you about what pain medicines to use. Give the pain medicines following this advice and the instructions on the bottle. Remember that after surgery painkillers should be given **regularly**, until the pain is gone. Different types of painkillers work well together, for instance, paracetamol and ibuprofen (nurofen) can be given at the same time for 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 the severity of pain, you should **contact the hospital for advice**.

Non-drug techniques along with the pain medicine can help manage your child's pain for example reading a story, watching TV, massage or playing gentle games can take the focus of the pain away using distraction.



Frequently asked question about postoperative pain

How can I tell if my child is in pain?

If your child is old enough, he/she will be able to tell you that he/she is in pain. It is more difficult to judge in younger children, but his/her behaviour can help you, for example crying, irritable, decreased appetite or being quiet and not interested in playing.

How long should I give painkillers for?

No two children will feel pain in the same way. In general, you should give your child painkillers for as long as he/she is complaining of pain. When the pain is bad, you should give the painkillers regularly, "by the clock", do not wait for your child to complain of pain. The length of time your child will need painkillers for will depend on the operation he/she has had. Once the pain is less severe, you should only give your child painkillers when he/she complains of pain.

Is it OK to give my child more than one painkiller at the same time?

Yes, it is safe to give **combinations of painkillers** at the same time, for instance paracetamol and ibuprofen can be given together. It is important not to give your child different brands of the same medicine, always read the label carefully, making sure you give the correct dose.