

Information for Parents

This booklet is designed to help you to administer the medicines prescribed for your child safely after discharge from South Perth Hospital. Please discuss your child's individual needs with your nurse or surgeon before you leave the hospital.

Points to Remember:

- For the first 2 days after going home, continue to give the pain relief medication as directed and follow the instructions on the medicine packaging.
- After 2 days, use your child's pain and activity levels as an indication of how much and how often to give them pain relief. If they seem happy and active, they may not need pain relief as often. During the day, children often don't notice the pain as much as they are distracted and keeping busy.
- It may be helpful to give pain relief before bed-time for the first few days to ensure that your child has a good night's sleep.
- Every child is different. Some children may only require pain relieving medicines for a short period while others will need it for longer. After surgery, most children will only require pain relief for week or less. If your child is still in quite a lot of pain after one week or if you have used up all the pain relieving medications provided on discharge, please contact your surgeon or GP for advice.

How do you know when your child is in pain?

There will always be some pain and discomfort associated with surgery and not all children can tell you when they are in pain. As a parent, you know them best and a good guide to the level of pain they are experiencing can be seen in changes to their normal pattern of behaviour. Signs of pain can include:

- Crying
- Changes in sleeping and eating patterns
- Becoming quiet and withdrawn
- Refusing to move
- Restlessness

Types of Pain Relieving Medicines

The 3 most commonly prescribed pain relief medicines for children are:

- **Paracetamol** (also known as *Panadol*, *Dymadon*, *Panamax*): A simple pain relief medicine which is safe and effective when taken as directed (every 6 hours)
Ensure that when using the liquid form that you use the right product and dose strength for your child's age and weight as there are several different strengths.
Many other medicines have paracetamol in them, including many medicines for coughs and colds. If these medicines contain paracetamol, it will be written on the label.
It is important that your child does not receive more than the recommended daily dose of paracetamol.
- **Ibuprofen** (also known as *Nurofen*): Provides effective relief from pain caused by inflammation.
Ibuprofen can be given at the same time as paracetamol but not as frequently (every 8 hours) and it must be given with food.
Side effects may include nausea or tummy pain
- **Oxycodone**: An opioid like analgesic used for moderate to severe pain not relieved by paracetamol or ibuprofen. Do NOT give more than the recommended dose and ALWAYS read the label before measuring the dose.
Some side effects include constipation, nausea and drowsiness. If your child does not have a bowel motion within a period of time normal for them, talk to your Pharmacist about a suitable laxative.
As your child's pain improves, slowly reduce the amount of Oxycodone you give in a day and increase the time between doses.

Other medicines:

Your child may be prescribed a short course of antibiotics to prevent infection after surgery. It is important that your child completes the whole course, even if they do not seem unwell. If your child feels nauseated or is vomiting with the antibiotic, contact your surgeon or GP for advice.

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SOUTH PERTH
HOSPITAL

Pain Management After Discharge: A Parent's Guide



Standard 4 - Medication Safety

