Information for patients and visitors

Pain Relief for Children and Young People following Surgery

Children’s Services
Women and Children’s Services

This leaflet has been designed to give you important information about pain relief for children and young people following surgery and answer some common queries that you may have.
Information for patients and visitors

Introduction
This leaflet has been written to help you and your child understand if they are in pain, help relieve pain after their operation and ensure that the medicines given are taken most effectively.

Many operations result in pain for a short period of time after the operation.

Benefits
This leaflet will help you and your child manage the pain and keep it to a minimum using pain relieving medication.

Risks
Common side effects to medicines will be listed on the patient information leaflet inside the medicine box.

If you have any concerns or if your child is allergic to any medicines, please inform the doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

Alternatives
There are other methods available to help your child if they are in pain, for example; distraction and play therapy.

There are nursing and play staff on the ward who can help you with these methods which are often very effective in reducing both pain and anxiety.

It is often helpful to combine these methods with pain relieving medicines to relieve pain after surgery.

How do I know if my child is in pain?
To assess if your child is in pain, you can use the same methods as the nurses on the ward do.

Babies and Toddlers: Watch how your baby is acting. Are they crying? Will they feed? Are they unsettled?

Young children: Look at your child’s behaviour compared to their usual behaviour. Are they complaining more? Crying more? Playing less? Doing the things they normally do? Quieter than usual? Refusing to eat? Holding the sore part of their body? More flushed than usual?

Faces pain scale: This can be useful for children aged four years or older and works by your child picking the face that best describes his or her pain. It is important that your child understands that you want to know about their pain, not how upset they are.

Wong-Baker FACES Pain Rating Scale


Pain Relief
Pain relieving medications will be given to you before you leave hospital. They should be taken before the pain becomes severe and regularly for the first few days.

Paracetamol can be given every 4-6 hours, up to a maximum of 4 times in a 24 hour period.

Ibuprofen can be given every 4-6 hours, up to a maximum of 3 or 4 times in a 24 hour period.

The doses and amount (in mL) will be clearly written on the medicines given to you.
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These should be taken spaced apart to make sure that your child’s pain is under control e.g. 2-3 hours apart.

For example, if both Paracetamol and ibuprofen 4 x a day
8:00 Paracetamol
10:00 Ibuprofen
12:00 Paracetamol
14:00 Ibuprofen
16:00 Paracetamol
18:00 Ibuprofen
20:00 Paracetamol
22:00 Ibuprofen

If you have been instructed that the ibuprofen is to be given 3 times a day rather than 4, the dosage times can be adjusted for this.

It is very important that you do not give more than the recommended dose or frequency in any 24 hour period. Please be careful as there are many different brands of both Paracetamol and ibuprofen so always check the ingredient.

Common Side Effects

Ibuprofen can sometimes make your child feel a little sick and it is a good idea to give this medicine with food.

If your child experiences vomiting and / or diarrhoea please seek medical advice.

If Pain Persists

If by day 3 the pain is no better or your child is still requiring regular pain relieving medications by day 5, contact your GP or if you have been referred to the community nursing team, please contact them.

Additional Information

If you have any concerns please do not hesitate to speak to either a member of nursing or medical staff.

Alternatively you could seek advice from your child’s GP or NHS Direct on 1111 or www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

References

Resuscitation Council UK, Paediatric Subcommittee, March 2011
www.resu.org.uk/pages/teachPLS.htm
Accessed March 2015

Concerns and Queries

If you have any concerns / queries about any of the services offered by the Trust, in the first instance, please speak to the person providing your care.

For Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital

Alternatively you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on (01472) 875403 or at the PALS office which is situated near the main entrance.

For Scunthorpe General Hospital

Alternatively you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on (01724) 290132 or at the PALS office which is situated on C Floor.

Alternatively you can email: nlg-tr.PALS@nhs.net

For more information about our Trust and the services we provide please visit our website: www.nlg.nhs.uk
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