

Pain relief in children

Following our assessment and treatment of your child, we are satisfied that your child can go home. However, it is important that your child is as comfortable as possible. This leaflet provides information on providing appropriate pain relief in children.

Pain relief in the Emergency Department

The Clinical Effectiveness Committee at the College of Emergency Medicine states that “recognition and alleviation of pain should be a priority when treating ill and injured children. This process should start at the triage, be monitored during their time in the Emergency Department and finish with ensuring adequate analgesia at, and if appropriate, beyond discharge”.

Assessing your child's pain

Pain in children is commonly under-recognised, under-treated and treatment may be delayed. Reasons include difficulty in assessing severity, the child may not appear distressed or may have difficulty describing / admitting to pain. Drug choice and dosage may also cause problems due to unfamiliarity. You know your child best and will be able to identify changes in behaviour. Observe your child's activity level; they may lose interest in play or be unable to sleep.

Relieving your child's pain once you get home

- Psychological strategies: involving you as the parent, cuddles, child-friendly explanation. Also, distraction with toys, blowing bubbles, reading, or story-telling using superhero or magical imagery to make the pain go away.
- Non-drug methods: such as limb immobilisation (plaster casts) or dressings for burns may have been applied before discharge.
- Pharmacological agents (drugs): Regular medications as advised by your doctor on discharge such as Calpol (Paracetamol) and Junifen/Calprofen (Ibuprofen) can be given. Always read the label before giving your child medications. Make sure that the pain relief is given at regular intervals and do not wait for the pain to return. These medications can also be given to reduce a child's fever. They are available over the counter from a chemist. Follow the dosage advice on the bottle. If this is not enough please contact your family doctor.

Painkiller dosage reminder

Medication given at time

Next dose due

No more than tablets per 24 hours.

Medication given at time

Next dose due

No more than tablets per 24 hours.

What to look out for

If your child is still in pain despite these measures or you are worried, return to the Emergency Department or see your GP.

References:

RCEM Management of Pain in Children, July 2017

Tell us your views

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your treatment and care, please speak to a senior member of staff or to the nurse looking after you. The matrons are also available during normal working hours and they welcome your views.

You can also pick up a copy of the Trust leaflet called 'Talk to us', which explains how you can raise concerns or give feedback on your experience at the hospital.

Friends and Family Test

Whatever your experience you can give feedback by answering the Friends & Family test question – 'Overall, how was your experience of our service?' - by going online www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/get-in-touch/friends-and-family-survey.htm.

Further information

www.nhs.uk

More information is available on the Trust website: www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Paediatric Emergency Department

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