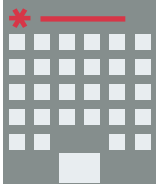


# MANAGING PAIN AND OPIOID MEDICINES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



## In hospital

Pain is a common experience when your child is in hospital. Talk to your child's health professional about how pain is affecting your child, so they can help keep them as comfortable as possible.

There are many ways to treat pain, with and without medicines such as paracetamol and ibuprofen. Your child has been prescribed an opioid, a type of pain-relieving or analgesic medicine (eg, oxycodone, tramadol, morphine). These medicines work well for short-term pain but they have significant side effects and can be addictive.

**It's important to only use opioids for the shortest time and at the lowest effective dose. Opioids should be used only if your child still has pain after taking paracetamol and anti-inflammatories like ibuprofen regularly.**



## Ask your child's health professional

**How long will the pain last?**

**How much will this medicine reduce the pain?**



## Leaving hospital

Before your child leaves hospital, make sure you ask their health professional these **5 questions** and any others you may have.

**1**

### What is causing the pain?

The cause of the pain and how long it is expected to last depends on your child's situation.

**2**

### What are the risks and benefits of this medicine?

Opioids reduce pain – they won't take the pain away completely. Any benefit needs to be weighed against potential harms. Opioids have major side effects, including constipation, drowsiness, slow breathing and the possibility of dependence and overdose.

**3**

### How long should my child take this medicine?

Opioids should only be used for the shortest time and at the lowest dose possible. Discuss with your child's doctor or pharmacist when you can lower their dose or stop the medicine altogether.

**4**

### Are there other ways to manage the pain?

There are lots of effective and safer ways to manage pain, such as supporting your child to feel safe, build activity slowly, encourage and participate in gentle exercises and relaxation techniques. Most people need to use a combination of strategies. Simple analgesics such as paracetamol and anti-inflammatories should be used regularly.

**5**

### What is my child's pain management plan?

Work with your child's health professional to develop a plan that works for them. You can use the pain management plan template over the page.





**At home**

Use these top tips to keep your child and others around you safe while your child is taking opioids.



Do not use your child's medicine or share it with others



Store securely out of reach of children and pets



Take leftover medicines to your pharmacy or hospital for disposal



If this medicine is making your child too sleepy, consult your child's health professional

**Pain management plan**

Child's goal .....

There are many ways you and your child can manage pain and speed recovery. Work with your child's health professional to create a personalised pain management plan.

Physical (body)	Psychological (mind)	Social (lifestyle)
<input type="checkbox"/> Build activity slowly <input type="checkbox"/> Physiotherapy <input type="checkbox"/> Gentle exercises <input type="checkbox"/> Massage <input type="checkbox"/> Heat or cold pack	<input type="checkbox"/> Relaxation <input type="checkbox"/> Mindfulness <input type="checkbox"/> Distraction <input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)	<input type="checkbox"/> Healthy eating <input type="checkbox"/> Better sleep habits <input type="checkbox"/> Seeing friends and family

Pain medicines
<input type="checkbox"/> Paracetamol ..... <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-inflammatory medicine ..... <input type="checkbox"/> Opioid ..... <input type="checkbox"/> Other .....

Other notes



**Ask your child's health professional**

- When should I seek urgent medical attention for my child?
- When should we next see my child's doctor?