

For more information

Call the Rose's Day Care Unit (paediatric ambulatory care unit) on 020 7288 3769 from 7.30am - 7.30pm, our paediatric ward on 020 7288 5442 or our medicine information line on 020 7288 5021.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a question, compliment, comment or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please contact us on 020 7288 3182. We will try our best to meet your needs.

Managing children's pain at home

A parent's guide

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Introduction

When your child leaves the hospital, you will be given two medicines to manage their pain: paracetamol and ibuprofen.

What is it paracetamol?

Paracetamol is a very good mild pain reliever. As well as pain, it can treat fever. Paracetamol works well on its own but is especially effective when taken in combination with ibuprofen (see below).

When do I give it?

A correct dose should be given every six hours, for the first two days after surgery. The dose is written on the label of the medicine bottle and will depend on the age and size of your child.

Are there any side effects?

Side effect from paracetamol is very unlikely. Taking too much paracetamol can be harmful, so do not give your child more than the prescribed amount and no more than four doses in 24 hours.

What is ibuprofen?

Ibuprofen is used to treat pain and fever. It is particularly useful after an operation as it reduces swelling and as well as pain. The effects of ibuprofen tend to last a bit longer than paracetamol and can be given every six to eight hours.

When do I give it?

A correct dose should be given three to four times a day for the first two days, and then when it is required for pain relief. It should preferably be taken with or after food.

What are the side effects?

The most common side effects of ibuprofen are slight tummy aches and/or diarrhoea. Some children may have an allergic reaction which can cause a rash. Ibuprofen can be given to asthmatics but, occasionally, this can trigger wheezing. If your child shows any sign of an allergic reaction, stop giving the medicine immediately and contact Lfor, our paediatric ward, or your GP.

How do paracetamol and ibuprofen work?

As paracetamol and ibuprofen provide pain relief by two very different routes, they work well when taken together. To get the full benefit of both medicines, it is better not to have them at the same time. This can help to prevent your child experiencing pain between doses.

Tips and further advice

- Give a dose at bedtime. This will help your child get a good night's sleep.
- Do not worry about giving your child these medicines. They will not become addicted.
- The medicines will not slow their healing.
- Try to help your child to relax. When we are tense or upset, pain often seems worse. It also helps if you appear relaxed.
- Distracting your child from thinking about the pain can help. Some of the ways you can do this is by talking to them, reading or watching a film together.