

# Managing Your Child's Pain After Surgery

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## **What pain can I expect for my child after surgery?**

You can expect your child to have some pain after surgery. This is normal. The pain is typically worse the day after surgery, and quickly begins to get better.

## **How will I manage my child's pain?**

The best strategy for controlling your child's pain after surgery is around-the-clock pain control with acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (Motrin®).

**Around-the-clock** means that you will give your child these medications throughout the day and night on a schedule (every 6 hours).

- If your child has a condition that does not allow them to take these medications, let your child's surgical team know.

## **How do I give these pain medications together around-the-clock?**

You will give doses of acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (Motrin®) together every 6 hours. Use the dose listed in your child's discharge paperwork, and ask your nurse when to start this pain medication schedule.

- Start by giving your child a dose of acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (Motrin®) together.
- 6 hours later, give them another dose of acetaminophen and ibuprofen.
- 6 hours later, give them another dose of acetaminophen and ibuprofen.
- Continue giving your child a dose of acetaminophen and ibuprofen together every 6 hours for at least 48 hours (2 days) after their surgery.

You can see an example timetable below of how to give your child pain medications on this schedule, if you started their first dose of pain medications at 3:00 PM. Your child's first dose and the time at which they take it may be different.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Pain medications given</b>
3:00 PM	Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (Motrin®)
9:00 PM	Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (Motrin®)
3:00 AM	Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (Motrin®)
Continue giving your child a dose of acetaminophen and ibuprofen together every 6 hours for at least 48 hours (2 days) after their surgery.	

### **How can I keep track of the pain medications I give my child?**

Use the tables at the end of this handout to keep track of the medications you are giving your child. After 48 hours (2 days), you may need to keep using these medications on a schedule during the day, but you may not need to wake your child at night to give them the medication. Ask your child if they are in pain at least every 6 hours, so you can decide whether they need the medication.

**Important:** Do not give acetaminophen or ibuprofen more often or in higher doses than recommended. If you have questions on how much is safe to give, ask your surgical team or pharmacist.

### **What if my child still has pain?**

If your child has pain that is not controlled with the acetaminophen and ibuprofen, they might have what we call “breakthrough” pain. This may happen if your child falls behind on their pain medication schedule. Try using distraction techniques (reading books, watching movies, etc.), or use cold or heating pads around their surgical cuts and restart taking acetaminophen and ibuprofen on a 6-hour schedule.

If your child is still having uncontrolled pain after trying these methods, call our office at (734) 936-8051 on Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM. After 5:00 PM or on weekends or holidays, call (734) 936-6267. We will help make sure you are managing your child’s pain in the best way possible.

**Pain medication tracking tables:**

<b>Day 1</b>				
<b>Time</b>	<b>Name of pain medication</b>	<b>Dose (in millileters)</b>	<b>Pain level</b>	<b>Comments</b>
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				

<b>Day 2</b>				
<b>Time</b>	<b>Name of pain medication</b>	<b>Dose (in millileters)</b>	<b>Pain level</b>	<b>Comments</b>
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				

<b>Day 3</b>				
<b>Time</b>	<b>Name of pain medication</b>	<b>Dose (in millileters)</b>	<b>Pain level</b>	<b>Comments</b>
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				

<b>Day 4</b>				
<b>Time</b>	<b>Name of pain medication</b>	<b>Dose (in millileters)</b>	<b>Pain level</b>	<b>Comments</b>
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				

<b>Day 5</b>				
<b>Time</b>	<b>Name of pain medication</b>	<b>Dose (in millileters)</b>	<b>Pain level</b>	<b>Comments</b>
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				

<b>Day 6</b>				
<b>Time</b>	<b>Name of pain medication</b>	<b>Dose (in millileters)</b>	<b>Pain level</b>	<b>Comments</b>
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				

Day 7				
Time	Name of pain medication	Dose (in millileters)	Pain level	Comments
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				
AM PM				

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