

Pain management

Pain management

You have been prescribed pain killers (analgesics) for a condition causing you pain. This factsheet is to provide information on how to take those painkillers.

There are many different conditions or injuries which cause pain, ranging from mild to severe. Everybody reacts differently to pain and feels it differently. Your pain can be managed following this advice.

How long you need to take your pain medications will depend on the precise condition or injury and you as an individual.

Balanced pain management

This is a layered approach where you will be on 2 or 3 medications and reduce them as the pain settles.

The best way to manage pain is to keep “on top” of or ahead of it. This means taking regular medications at the outset and then reducing them as you need them less.

Balanced pain management (analgesia) uses two or more medications that act in different ways to achieve a superior effect without increasing adverse events (side effects).

The initial medications are paracetamol and ibuprofen (nurofen), both available from your chemist.

You will have had your first dose of each in the Emergency Department and should

continue these for at least 48 hours. These should be taken after some food.

If you have ongoing pain then you will be prescribed a stronger medication such as oxycodone (endone), either 5 or 10 mg, which can be taken 6 hourly.

For most painful conditions the worst of the pain settles in a few days. As explained by your doctor, when the need for the stronger medication reduces, you should reduce down the number and frequency of these. Continue your paracetamol and ibuprofen until your pain remains settled or absent, at which point you can reduce these as advised overleaf. This can happen over a few days or up to a week. If you require strong pain medications after 5 days then see your local doctor.

What you do

- **Take paracetamol and ibuprofen and start when you are in hospital.**
- **Take a strong pain killer at a dose that works until you don't require it.**
- **See your local doctor if pain increases**
- **If pain persists after 5 days see your local doctor.**
- **If you get sick or have stomach pain cease you medications and see your doctor.**

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Your pain prescription: (Your doctor will circle the appropriate medications)

• **Adult initial medications**

Drug	Strength	No. of days	Dose	Frequency	Suggested times of day
Paracetamol	500 mg	.....	2 tablets (1g)	4 times a day	0800, 1200, 1600, 2000
Ibuprofen (nurofen)	200 mg	.....	2 tablets (400mg)	3 times a day	0800, 1400, 2200 After food

• **Adult strong medications**

Drug	Strength	No. of days	Dose	Frequency	Maximum dose
Oxycodone (endone)	5 mg	.....	1-2 tablets	Every 6 hours	Max dose ...../day
Other.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Max dose ...../day

• **Child initial medications — doses by kilogram** (do not exceed adult doses for larger children)

Drug		No. of days	Dose	Frequency
Paracetamol	Orally	.....	15 mg/kg =	Every 6 hours
	Rectally	.....	15 mg/kg =	Every 6 hours
Ibuprofen (nurofen)	Orally	.....	10 mg/kg =	Every 8 hours

• **Child strong medications — doses by kilogram** (do not exceed adult doses for larger children)

Codeine is often used because it is available in liquid form, usually at the dose 0.5-1 mg/kg. Note, endone can be used for larger children.

Drug	Strength	No. of days	Dose	Frequency	Maximum dose
.....	Max dose ...../day

Instructions:

See your GP in days

Seeking help:



In a medical emergency go to your nearest emergency department or call 000.

