

Pain management for your child

At Evelina London Children's Hospital, we try to make sure your child is as comfortable as possible after their surgery.

A multidisciplinary pain team includes an anaesthetist, pharmacist, ward doctors and nurse, and a clinical nurse specialist. This team will be involved in controlling your child's pain.

This information explains some of the ways pain can be managed while your child is in hospital.

Why will my child need pain medicine?

Some pain or discomfort after surgery can be expected.

Different types of painkillers (analgesics) are available to control this. Painkillers will be personalised to your child's needs so that they are comfortable at all stages after surgery.

Painkillers that might be used

After minor surgery, simple painkillers, such as paracetamol, can be very effective in giving pain relief.

Medicines such as ibuprofen or diclofenac might also be used, but these might not be suitable if patients have asthma or kidney disease.

After major surgery, morphine might be prescribed. This can be given in different ways, including by mouth (orally), by a single injection, or by a 'drip' (a continuous IV infusion given through a tube into their hand or arm).

Local anaesthetics are also used to give pain relief. These are usually given immediately before or during surgery while your child is under general anaesthesia.

There are different ways these can be given, such as:

- an epidural infusion
- a caudal injection (at the base of the spine)
- paravertebral block injection (around the nerves coming out of the spine)
- local injection to numb individual nerves

The anaesthetist will discuss these options with you before surgery if they are appropriate for your child.

How medicines are given

There are 3 main ways medicines can be taken:

- by mouth (orally) as liquids or tablets
- put into the bottom (rectally) as suppositories
- directly into the bloodstream, using an injection (as a single injection, or using an intravenous (IV) drip

Can painkillers be combined

Yes. We often do this to give extra pain relief. Please note medicines must **only** be given by medical or nursing staff while your child is in hospital.

When your child leaves hospital

Your child might need to continue with some painkillers for a short while after they leave hospital. They might be given a prescription which can be collected from the hospital's pharmacy before you leave.

If your child has continued discomfort despite this medicine, please call the ward for advice or contact your GP.

Please refer to our other information about **specialised pain relief methods for your child** for more details.

Contact us

Phone 020 7188 7188, and then enter the extension for the right ward:

Sky ward, extension 88956

Mountain ward, extension 88852

Savannah ward, extension 88848

Beach ward, extension 88844

Snow Fox, extension 84670

For more information on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **web** www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/leaflets

Evelina London Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's medicines, please speak to the staff caring for them or contact our helpline, **phone** 020 7188 3003, Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm **email** letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk

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