



Pain Medicine after Outpatient Surgery

(Alternating acetaminophen and ibuprofen,
with oxycodone for breakthrough pain)

We partner with you
and your child to
prevent and relieve
pain as completely as
possible.

After a surgery or a procedure, your child may have pain and discomfort. Effective pain control will help your child feel better and heal faster. This handout describes how to safely give your child medicine to relieve pain.

What medicines will help relieve my child's pain?

There are a number of ways to treat pain. Acetaminophen and ibuprofen are common medicines used to treat pain. A stronger medicine, called oxycodone, may be prescribed for breakthrough pain. Breakthrough pain is pain that is not relieved by acetaminophen and ibuprofen.

Your child's healthcare provider has prescribed these medicines:

- ☐ Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
- ☐ Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin)
- ☐ Oxycodone
- ☐ Other: _____

How much medicine do I give my child?

The dose may be different for each medicine your child is prescribed. Always read the prescription or label on the medicine container to confirm how much you should give your child. If you did not receive a prescription for Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen, you can follow the [Acetaminophen \(Tylenol\) Dosage Table](#) and [Ibuprofen \(Motrin\) Dosage Table](#) handouts.

How often do I give medicine for pain?

It is best to stay on top of your child's pain by treating it early, rather than waiting for it to get worse. Give your child acetaminophen every 6 hours and ibuprofen every 6 hours. Do not give them at the same time. Alternate the acetaminophen and ibuprofen medicines, so that your child gets one of these medicines every 3 hours. Continue to alternate medicines for the number of days your child's doctor prescribed.

As discomfort or pain improves, you may give your child these medicines less often, or only as needed. Use the Pain Medicine log on page 4 to keep track of when you, and other care givers, give your child pain medicines.

Should I wake my child to give them pain medicine?

If your child is resting comfortably, you do not need to wake your child to give pain medicines. But, if they wake with a lot of pain, you may want to wake them the next night to give them a dose. When possible, give your child a dose right before they go to sleep.

Does my child need to eat with pain medicine?

You can give your child acetaminophen without food (on an empty stomach). Ibuprofen and oxycodone should be given with some food.

What if acetaminophen and ibuprofen do not relieve my child's pain?

Sometimes alternating doses of acetaminophen and ibuprofen do not provide enough pain relief. For breakthrough pain, your child may be prescribed a stronger type of pain medicine called oxycodone. Give oxycodone as needed along with the alternating doses of acetaminophen and ibuprofen. Wait at least 4 hours between doses of oxycodone.

If you are unsure if your child is having breakthrough pain or they are not able to express their pain with words, use the Pain After Surgery Measure below. If your child is able to tell you they are in pain use the 0-10 Scale or the FACES Pain Scale on page 3.

Pain after Surgery Measure

Children who may not be able to express their pain with words may have changes in behavior that show pain. Below is a list of behaviors your child may or may not have after a surgery or procedure. Watch your child's behavior for a period of time, for example, between breakfast and lunch or lunch and dinner. If you answer "yes" to 6 or more questions, your child is having pain that should be treated with oxycodone.

Between _____ and _____ today did your child:

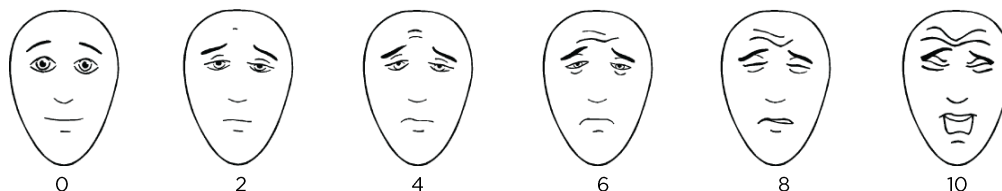
- Whine or complain more than usual? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Cry more easily than usual? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Play less than usual? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Not do the things they normally do? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Act worried more than usual? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Act more quiet than usual? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Have less energy than usual? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Refuse to eat? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Eat less than usual? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Hold the sore part of their body? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Try not to bump the sore part of their body? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Groan or moan more than usual? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Look more flushed than usual? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Want to be close to you more than usual? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Take medicine when they normally refuse? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Information from: Chambers, C.T., Reid, G.J., McGrath, P.J., & Finley, G.A. (1996). Development and preliminary validation of a postoperative pain measure for parents. *Pain*, 68, 307-313.

Your child's age and developmental level will determine which pain scale is most appropriate to use. Each child's response to pain may be different. Talk to your child's provider about a goal comfort score and at what point on these scales your child's pain should be treated with a stronger type of pain medicine, such as oxycodone.

FACES PAIN SCALE – REVISED (FPS-R) for children over age 3

Point to the face that shows how much you hurt.



These faces show how much something can hurt.

The left-most face shows no pain. The faces show more and more pain up to the right-most face – it shows very much pain.

0-10 SCALE for children over age 7

On a scale of 0 to 10, with '0' being no pain and '10' being the worst pain you can imagine, what number are you feeling right now?

0 **10**
No pain **Worst pain**

Questions?

We are committed to partnering with you and your child to prevent and relieve your child's pain. Some discomfort following a procedure or surgery is expected. If you are worried that your child's pain is too severe, contact your care team at any time.

To Learn More

- Your child's surgery clinic
- Ask your healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.
- For Deaf and hard of hearing callers: 206-987-2280 (TTY)

Acknowledgements:

Faces Pain Scale – Revised (FPS-R) (2001) Hicks CL, von Baeyer CL, Spafford P, van Korlaar I, Goodenough B. Faces Pain Scale-Revised: Toward a Common Metric in Pediatric Pain Measurement. *Pain* 93:173-183. With the instructions and translations as found on the website: <http://www.usask.ca/childpain/fpsr/>. This figure has been reproduced with permission of the International Association for the Study of Pain® (IASP®). The figure may not be reproduced for any other purpose without permission.

Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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Pain Medicine Log

Child's Name _____

Surgery Date _____

Instructions:

- Give one medicine dose every 3 hours, alternating between acetaminophen and ibuprofen.
- Give oxycodone as needed for breakthrough pain, pain that is not relieved by acetaminophen and ibuprofen. Wait at least 4 hours between doses of oxycodone.
- Your child should follow this medicine schedule for the number of days their doctor prescribed.
- Record each medicine at the time you give it.

Day of the week:

Alternate Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen			Oxycodone - Give as needed. Wait at least 4 hours between doses	
	Acetaminophen Give every 6 hours	Ibuprofen Give every 6 hours		
Time	Time Given	Time Given	Time	Time Given
6 am			6 am	
7 am	x		7 am	
8 am			8 am	
9 am			9 am	
10 am		x	10 am	
11 am			11 am	x
12 pm			12 pm	
1 pm	x		1 pm	
2 pm			2 pm	
3 pm			3 pm	
4 pm		x	4 pm	
5 pm			5 pm	
6 pm			6 pm	
7 pm	x		7 pm	
8 pm			8 pm	x
9 pm			9 pm	
10 pm		x	10 pm	
11 pm	(sleeping)		11 pm	
12 am			12 am	
1 am			1 am	
2 am			2 am	
3 am			3 am	
4 am			4 am	
5 am			5 am	

Day of the week:

Alternate Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen			Oxycodone - Give as needed. Wait at least 4 hours between doses	
	Acetaminophen Give every 6 hours	Ibuprofen Give every 6 hours		
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8 am			8 am	
9 am			9 am	
10 am			10 am	
11 am			11 am	
12 pm			12 pm	
1 pm			1 pm	
2 pm			2 pm	
3 pm			3 pm	
4 pm			4 pm	
5 pm			5 pm	
6 pm			6 pm	
7 pm			7 pm	
8 pm			8 pm	
9 pm			9 pm	
10 pm			10 pm	
11 pm			11 pm	
12 am			12 am	
1 am			1 am	
2 am			2 am	
3 am			3 am	
4 am			4 am	
5 am			5 am	

Pain Medicine Log

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2 pm		
3 pm		
4 pm		
5 pm		
6 pm		
7 pm		
8 pm		
9 pm		
10 pm		
11 pm		
12 am		
1 am		
2 am		
3 am		
4 am		
5 am		

Oxycodone - Give as needed. Wait at least 4 hours between doses	
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5 am		

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4 am	
5 am	