



Managing Your Child's Pain After Surgery Without Opioids

For Pediatric Patients Participating in the Michigan Pain-Control Optimization Pathway for Appendectomy (MPOP)

Thank you for participating in our program to help patients and their families manage their pain after surgery without opioids. This is part of our effort to provide your child with the best care possible, without exposing your child or your family to the risk that opioids pose.

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.

We recently conducted a study that found many patients are able to manage their pain after surgery with Over-the-Counter (OTC) medications such as Tylenol (acetaminophen) and Motrin or Advil (ibuprofen). If your child has a condition that does not allow them to take these medications, notify your child's surgical team.

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 Tylenol and Motrin. **Around the clock** means that you will give Tylenol and Motrin on a schedule, but you do not need to wake your child at night to give them these medications. You may choose to **alternate** these medications by giving one or the other every 3 hours, or **give them together** every 6 hours.

In addition to Tylenol and Motrin, you can also use other techniques to manage your child's pain. These including early return to activity, ice packs on their

incisions, spending time with them, playing or doing special projects, and allowing them to watch their favorite shows or movies.

How might I *alternate* Motrin and Tylenol around the clock?

You will give a dose of either Tylenol or Motrin every 3 hours on an alternating schedule. Use the dose listed in your child’s discharge paperwork and ask your nurse when to start this pain regimen.

- Start by giving Motrin
- 3 hours later give Tylenol
- 3 hours after giving the Tylenol, give Motrin
- 3 hours after that give Tylenol

See example below. In this scenario, the first dose of Motrin is at 3:00 PM. Your child’s first dose and the time at which they take it may differ.

| | |
|--|---------|
| 3:00 PM | Motrin |
| 6:00 PM | Tylenol |
| 9:00 PM | Motrin |
| 12:00 AM | Tylenol |
| 3:00 AM (or as soon as they wake up) | Motrin |
| Continue alternating Motrin and Tylenol every 3 hours for at least 48 hours (2 days) after surgery | |

How might I give Motrin and Tylenol *together* around the clock?

You will give doses of Tylenol or Motrin together every 6 hours. Use the dose listed in your child’s discharge paperwork and ask your nurse when to start this pain regimen.

- Start by giving Motrin and Tylenol together
- 6 hours later give Motrin and Tylenol together
- 6 hours later give Motrin and Tylenol together

See example - where the first dose of Motrin and Tylenol is at 3:00 PM. Your child's first dose and the time at which they take it may differ.

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| 3:00 PM | Motrin and Tylenol |
| 9:00 PM | Motrin and Tylenol |
| 3:00 AM (or as soon as they wake up) | Motrin and Tylenol |
| Continue giving Motrin and Tylenol together every 6 hours for at least 48 hours (2 days) after surgery | |

Use the table on the last page of this handout to keep track of the medications you are giving your child. After 48 hours, 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 and assess whether they need the medication.

Important:

Do not give Tylenol or Motrin 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 over-the-counter pain medications (Tylenol and Motrin) they might have what we call “breakthrough” pain. This may happen if your child falls behind on their pain regimen. Try offering distraction techniques, or cold or heating pads to the incisions and restart taking Tylenol and Motrin on schedule.

If your child is still having uncontrolled pain after taking the Motrin and Tylenol and trying distraction techniques, cold compresses, or heating pads,

don't hesitate to call our staff using the number provided. We will help make sure you are managing your child's pain in the best way possible.

| Day 1 | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Time | Name of Pain Medication | Number of milliliters given | Pain Level | Comments |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |

| Day 2 | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Time | Name of Pain Medication | Number of milliliters given | Pain Level | Comments |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |

| Day 3 | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Time | Name of Pain Medication | Number of milliliters given | Pain Level | Comments |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |

| Day 4 | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Time | Name of Pain Medication | Number of milliliters given | Pain Level | Comments |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |

| Day 5 | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Time | Name of Pain Medication | Number of milliliters given | Pain Level | Comments |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |

| Day 6 | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Time | Name of Pain Medication | Number of milliliters given | Pain Level | Comments |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |

| Day 7 | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Time | Name of Pain Medication | Number of milliliters given | Pain Level | Comments |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
| AM PM | | | | |
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| AM PM | | | | |

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