

# Pain relief after ear, nose and throat (ENT) surgery

This leaflet explains about pain management after ENT surgery. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

## Pain relief after surgery

It is important that you try to manage the pain you may feel after you leave hospital. Using pain relief can help you to relax and be more comfortable, and this can help you to recover more quickly.

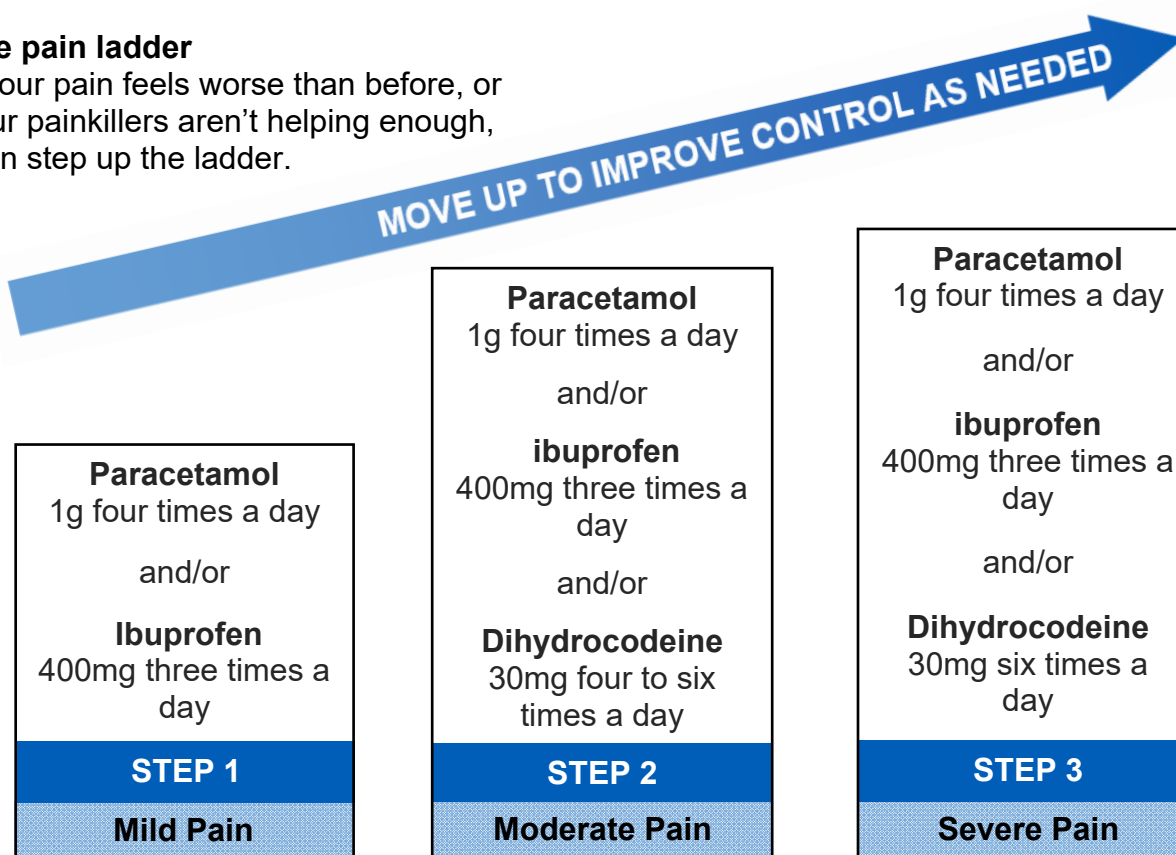
Painkillers are most effective when they are taken **regularly** throughout the day, rather than waiting for the pain to start or to get really bad. They also work best when different types are **combined**, as they work in different ways that complement each other.

The different combinations address different levels of pain. Some people find it useful to see these as steps on a ladder, as below.

Paracetamol and ibuprofen are painkillers and are available without prescription. They are effective when taken regularly and at the same time. We do not normally dispense or prescribe them as they are widely available over the counter in many shops.

### The pain ladder

If your pain feels worse than before, or your painkillers aren't helping enough, then step up the ladder.



## Suggested doses for medication

Suggested combined doses for adults are:

- paracetamol **500mg** take 2 tablets, four times a day
- **AND**
- ibuprofen **200mg**: take 2 tablets, three time a day with meals.

We sometimes prescribe the painkiller known as dihydrocodeine. This can be taken in addition to paracetamol and ibuprofen. If you have not been prescribed dihydrocodeine and you experience an increase in pain, please contact your general practitioner (GP) or the ENT department.

As with all medication, read the information in the packet so that you are aware of any side effects or affects they may have on other medicines or conditions.

### You should:

- follow the suggested dose
- remember to take your painkillers regularly and in combination as described previously
- only consider taking dihydrocodeine if your pain is not adequately managed with paracetamol and ibuprofen

### You should not:

- take ibuprofen if you have had stomach ulcers in the past or if you have indigestion
- take ibuprofen if you are allergic to aspirin
- take ibuprofen if you suffer from asthma and your symptoms (wheezing or breathless) get worse
- take paracetamol if you have been prescribed co-codamol (as this contains paracetamol already)
- take paracetamol if you are already taking another medication that contains paracetamol (some cold and flu remedies contain paracetamol – please check all labels carefully)
- drive any car or operate heavy machinery if you have taken any codeine, tramadol or morphine medication.

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about pain, please contact the ENT Department, Guy's Hospital, Great Maze Pond, London SE1 9RT.

The following telephone numbers will connect you to a nurse from the relevant area that you were discharged from:

Day surgery, **t:** 020 7188 7188 (Ext 81728)  
Blundell Ward, **t:** 020 7185 1101

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets)

## Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

**t:** 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

## Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

**t:** 020 7188 8801 (PALS)      **e:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk)

**t:** 020 7188 3514 (complaints)      **e:** [complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk)

## Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch. **t:** 020 7188 8815      **e:** [languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk)

## NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day. **t:** 111

## NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health. **w:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

## Get involved and have your say: become a member of the Trust

Members of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust contribute to the organisation on a voluntary basis. We count on them for feedback, local knowledge and support. Membership is free and it is up to you how much you get involved. To find out more, please get in touch.

**t:** 0800 731 0319      **e:** [members@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:members@gstt.nhs.uk)      **w:** [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership)



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