

Emergency Department

Pain relief

It is important that you try to keep on top of the pain you may feel after you leave hospital. Using pain relief can help you to relax and be more comfortable; 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.

Painkillers are also most effective when different types are **combined**, as they work in different ways that complement each other.

The following painkillers are available without prescription and 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.

Suggested doses for adults are:

- **Paracetamol 500mg tablets:** Take 2 tablets, four times a day.
- **Ibuprofen 400mg tablets:** Take 1 tablet, three times a day with meals.

We sometimes prescribe a third painkiller such as codeine, tramadol or morphine. These can also be taken in addition to paracetamol and ibuprofen. As with all medication, please read the information in the package so that you are aware of any side-effects or affect they may have on other medicines or conditions.

You should:

- Follow the suggested dosage.
- Remember to take your painkillers **regularly** and in **combination** as described previously.

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 breathlessness) get worse.
- take paracetamol if you have been prescribed co-codamol (as this contains paracetamol already). When taking paracetamol, do not take any other 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 been given or prescribed any codeine, tramadol or morphine medication.

How to contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact:

Emergency Department
John Radcliffe Hospital
Tel: 01865 220 224

Emergency Department
Horton General Hospital
Tel: 01295 229 412

Alternatively you can contact your GP or NHS 111 (Freephone), for emergency advice.

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