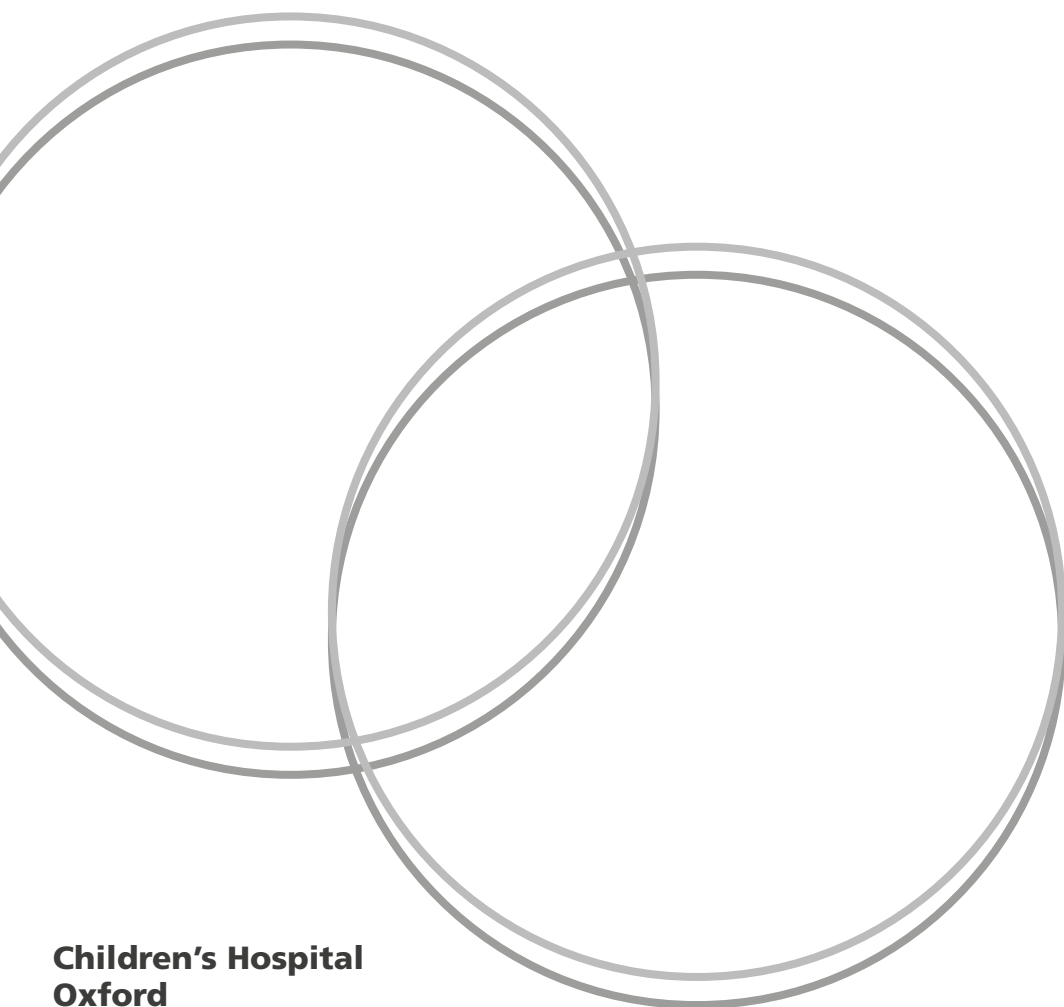




**Oxford University Hospitals**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# **Pain assessment and pain relief for your child**

**Information for  
parents and carers**



**Children's Hospital  
Oxford**

The assessment of pain is an important part of the care your child will receive while they are in hospital. Children and their families are sometimes worried that they may be in pain when they are in hospital and are often keen to know what can be done to prevent and reduce any discomfort.

This leaflet has been written to give you information about how your child's pain will be assessed and what we can do to help reduce your child's pain while they are in hospital.

# **Children's Inpatient Management of Pain Service (ChIMPS)**

We have a team of specialist nurses and pain management doctors, who will work with the ward staff to help to keep your child comfortable when they are in hospital. We also have various ways of managing your child's pain.

The Pain Management team may regularly visit your child when they are on the ward, to provide advice.

## **How we assess your child for pain**

Firstly, we have to find out more about their pain.

It is helpful to know:

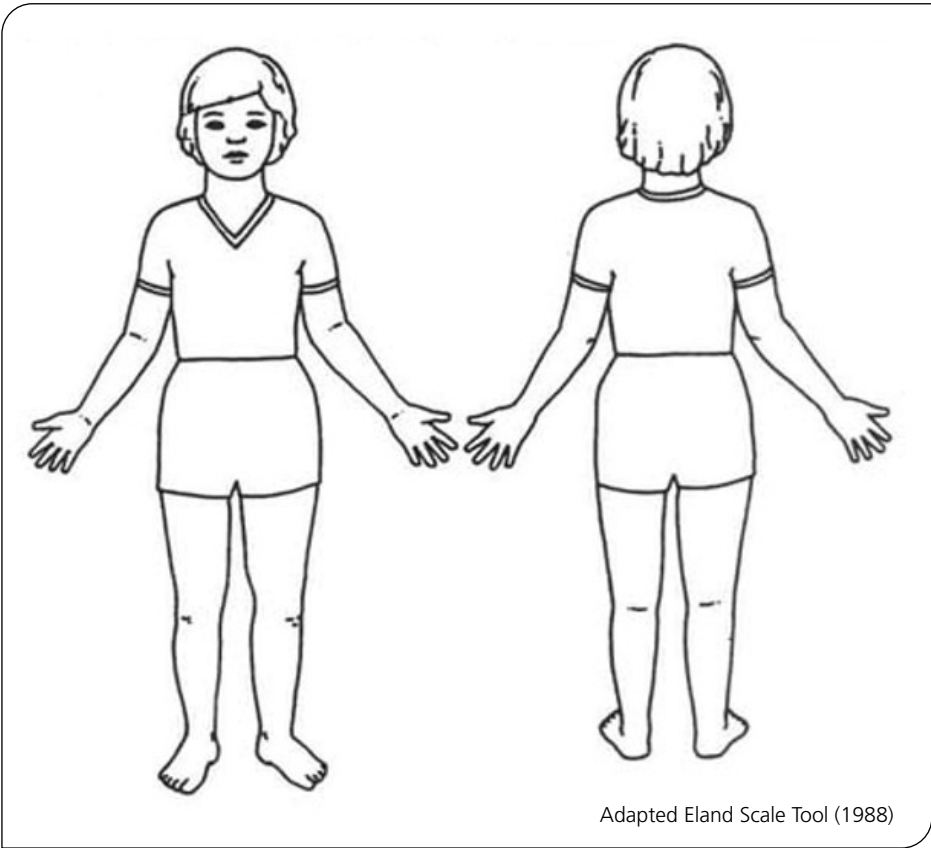
- where the pain is
- what it feels like
- how bad it is
- how often it is felt
- what helps to relieve it.

We will do this by using pain assessment tools with your child (see an example on the next page). We have tools for all age groups and for children with different communication needs. We will use these tools regularly, to make sure your child's pain relief is working.

# Example of a self reporting pain assessment tool for children

0	1	2	3
No pain	Mild pain	Moderate pain	Severe pain

## Body map to help with the location of pain



The nurses and doctors will also ask you about your opinion of your child’s level of pain. If you feel your child is in pain at any time, please tell their nurse.

# **Ways to help your child if they are in pain**

You have an important part to play in helping us to manage your child's pain, as you know them best. It is helpful to know what pain relief methods have worked well for your child in the past and how they would communicate to you that they are in pain.

## **Ways we can help reduce your child's pain**

### **Medicines:**

There are different pain relieving medicines available, which might be given to your child.

#### **Paracetamol**

This medicine is given to children for relieving pain and also to help with high temperatures. It is likely to be given regularly to your child, either by mouth or into a vein in their arm or hand (intravenously).

#### **Ibuprofen or diclofenac**

These are pain-relieving medicines that also reduce inflammation. They work well with paracetamol.

#### **Oral morphine**

This is a strong pain-relieving medicine that is sometimes used after operations or for severe pain.

We avoid giving children injections for relieving pain, if possible.

Your child might also be given one of the following methods of pain relief after an operation or procedure:

- PCA (Patient Controlled Analgesia)
- NCA (Nurse Controlled Analgesia)
- epidural infusion
- nerve infusion.

The decision to use these methods of pain relief would be made by your child's doctor or the anaesthetist. We have separate information sheets about these methods of pain relief, if required.

### **Other methods of pain relief:**

- distraction – encouraging your child to concentrate on something else (such as TV, films, games or counting)
- relaxation – deep breathing, using their imagination
- physiotherapy – position changes or massages.

The hospital play specialists can also help with managing pain.

## **Pain relief at home**

Before your child leaves hospital, their nurse will tell you about any medicines they can have to help with pain when they are at home. If your child's pain is not controlled when they are back at home, or they have side effects from the pain medicine, please see their GP.

If you have any questions please feel free to ask your nurse.

## **How to contact us**

If you would like further information, please contact the Children's Pain Management team.

Telephone: **0300 304 7777** and ask for **Bleep 1400**  
(Pain Management Nurse)

## Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

Adapted from the Great Ormond Street leaflet  
'Helping Your Child Cope With Everyday Pain'

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