

Scoliosis

Useful guidelines for your child's recovery at home

Pain

It is important to give your child regular pain relief at home. Do not wait for the pain to become severe before offering medication. You will be given written instructions about medication before your child is discharged.

Offer regularly:

- Targin BD
- Paracetamol three times a day
- Ibuprofen three times a day for five days
- Aperients for constipation

Offer as needed:

- Endone every four hours
- Tramadol every six to eight hours

Bowel care

Morphine-based medications can cause constipation with prolonged use. You will be given laxatives for your child to take at home until their bowel habits have returned to normal. Adjust the dose according to whether stools are being passed with difficulty or easily.

Ensuring your child drinks plenty of water and eats adequate amounts of fresh fruit and vegetables will also decrease the risk of constipation. Regular walking will also help with digestion.

If your child gets diarrhoea, cease one, but not both, until regular bowel habits recommence.

Hygiene

Your child may need some assistance in the shower for the first couple of weeks at home. It may be easier to sit on a chair in the shower, rather than stand. The waterproof dressing can be pat dried. It is important to keep the dressing clean and dry between showers.

Wound care

The dressing should remain in tact and be removed 14 days after surgery. There are short sutures at either end of the wound – they need to be snipped off to the skin. No further dressing should be required. If you would prefer, you can make an appointment with the GP for this. If there are any issues either yourself or the GP can contact the surgeon at the time for advice.

Activity

Please refer to the table at the end of this sheet for guidance on when your child may resume various activities.

- The hospital physiotherapist will show your child how to move safely while their back is healing at home
- If your child needs to bend for any reason, they should use their legs not their back
- Your child may need frequent rest periods throughout the day

Travel

- If you are flying home you will need a doctor's letter with their approval to fly (this is a requirement of the airlines)
- If you are driving a long distance by car you may need to break the trip up into several stages

Medications

- Give pain relief as prescribed by your surgeon
- Paracetamol can be given every four to six hours but no more than four times in a 24 hour period (ensure you follow correct dosage instructions for your child's age)
- Ibuprofen can be given as directed by your surgeon (should be taken with food)

Follow-up

Please contact your surgeon's rooms to organise a follow-up appointment, if you don't already have one.

When to contact your surgeon

Please contact your surgeon if your child has:

- A persistent temperature of 38.5°C or higher
- Sudden, severe back pain unrelieved by prescribed pain medication
- Any bleeding, redness, oozing or swelling around the wound, or if it feels hot to touch or has an offensive smell
- Numbness or tingling in arms and/or legs
- A fall

A note before you leave the hospital

Please report to the reception desk in the foyer of the hospital before leaving to finalise any administrative paperwork.

Cabrini Malvern Paediatric Ward
183 Wattletree Road, Malvern VIC 3144
03 9508 1378

Cabrini Brighton Paediatric Ward
243 New Street, Brighton VIC 3186
03 9508 5888



PAEDIATRIC DISCHARGE INFORMATION

Questions

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact your discharge ward on the number below.

Guide to resuming activities after spinal surgery

This is a general guide only of when your child may return to these activities after surgery – your doctor may provide you with specific instructions.

ACTIVITY	4 - 6 weeks	6 wks - 3 mths	6 - 9 months	1 year
bathing	✓			
school	half days	✓		
swimming (no diving)	✗	✓		
stationary exercise bike	✗	✓		
lifting	✗	2.5kg	4.5kg	20kg
bike riding	✗	✗	✓	
light jogging	✗	✗	✓	
reclined sitting	✗	✗	✓	
roller blading	✗	✗	✓	
tennis	✗	✗	✓	
aerobics/gymnastics	✗	✗	✗	✓
football	✗	✗	✗	✓
hockey	✗	✗	✗	✓
netball	✗	✗	✗	✓
cricket	✗	✗	✗	✓
skiing	✗	✗	✗	✓
swimming in surf	✗	✗	✗	✓
running	✗	✗	✗	✓
diving	✗	✗	✗	✓
trampoline	✗	✗	✗	✗