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Haematology Department

**Sickle Cell Crisis Management – Pain in Hospital**

Information for parents and carers

**Introduction**

This leaflet aims to provide you with general information about the signs and symptoms your child may have when they are having a sickle cell crisis. If you are ever worried about your child please contact your Sickle Cell Team or take your child to the Accident and Emergency Department.

**When should I bring my child to hospital?**

****If your child’s pain is severe and not controlled by Paracetamol, Ibuprofen and Dihydrocodeine / oral morphine, or they develop any other symptoms they need to come into hospital for stronger pain medicine, and medical assessment. More information is available in “When to bring your child to hospital" leaflet.

**What happens when my child arrives at hospital?**

A doctor or nurse will assess your child and take a history of what has happened during this crisis episode. You will be asked what pain medication you have given your child, how much, how often and when you last gave it.

Your child can expect to receive pain medication within 30 minutes of arriving at the hospital.

**How will my child’s pain be managed in hospital?**

After your child has been assessed they will be given pain medication. If it has been over four to six hours since you last gave your child Paracetamol, Ibuprofen and Dihydrocodine / oral morphine your child will receive those medications first.

If your child’s pain is so severe that oral pain medication does not work they will be given it through an intravenous drip (a small plastic tube into a vein). The pain medicine that is given is called Morphine. The Morphine dose can be controlled by the nurse (NCA) or by the child (PCA). You and your child will be kept fully informed to ensure you both understand what is happening.

Your child will continue to receive Paracetamol and Ibuprofen and their pain will be regularly assessed using the same pain tools you use at home.

Some children may only need a couple of oral doses of Morphine to get their pain under control, others may need Morphine for a few days.

**What else will be done to manage my child’s pain whilst they are in hospital?**

Doctors will do blood tests on your child to check their haemoglobin level and how well their liver and kidneys are working. They may do other investigations such as a urine sample, x-ray or other types of scans.

Your child will be encouraged to drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. If it is difficult for them to drink enough fluid they will be given fluid through an intravenous drip (IV) until they are able to drink an adequate amount of fluid.

If your child has any other symptoms apart from pain then they will receive treatment. For example if they have an infection then they will receive antibiotics.

**Will my child need to stay in hospital?**

If your child needs oral or intravenous Morphine or have any symptoms other than pain, they will need to stay in hospital.

**Further information**

If you have any questions or want any further information please contact your Sickle Cell Team on 0151 252 5070.



***Useful websites***

[www.alderhey.co.uk](http://www.alderhey.co.uk)

[www.sicklecellsociety.co.uk](http://www.sicklecellsociety.co.uk)

www.mychildisinpain.org.uk

Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust is neither liable for the contents of any external internet site listed, nor does it endorse any commercial product or service mentioned or advised on any of the sites.

This leaflet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child’s treatment.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

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