

The doctor may order medicine to help decrease possible side effects of your child's pain medicine. It is also important to encourage your child to eat and drink foods and fluids as ordered by their doctor.

Allergic reactions: On rare occasions, some medicine may cause difficulty breathing or hive-like reactions. This should be reported to your nurse right away.

### What can you do to help reduce your child's pain?

As a parent, you are your child's best advocate. You can assist in easing your child's pain and fears by helping with comfort measures. Your child will also benefit from the emotional support you can provide.

At Marshfield Children's Hospital, we strive to keep your child as comfortable as possible. Pain control is our priority for your child. Remember that it is sometimes necessary to do things that may cause discomfort (i.e. getting out of bed and moving into the chair or walking). Together we can provide the best pain management possible for your child.



**marshfield  
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[marshfieldchildrens.org](http://marshfieldchildrens.org)

Adapted from: Hockenberry, M., Wilson, D. (2007).  
Wong's Nursing Care of Infants and Children. St. Louis, Missouri

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# Understanding Pain and Helping Your Child

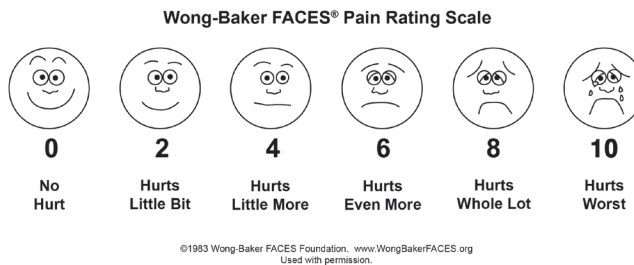


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## How do we measure your child's pain?

Different scales are used to measure pain. These may include use of pictures, numbers, words, and behaviors. Your child's nurse will help you and your child choose a scale. The use of the pain scale helps us decide if the current pain management therapy is working for your child. You can help by having your child describe their pain: burning, stabbing, sharp, dull, or achy. If your child is not able to use one of the common scales, we will look at behaviors such as facial expressions, restlessness, and irritability to decide if your child is feeling pain.



## How is pain treated?

At Marshfield Children's Hospital, we have many ways to help reduce your child's pain. We may use medicine, but we can also use a variety of methods to calm your child's worries and fears. Our goal is to have your child's pain at a level that will improve their recovery. This will encourage your child to join in activities and visit with family and friends.

## How are medicines given?

**Oral** – by mouth (liquid, chewable, pill)

**Sublingual** – under the tongue

**Intravenous** – in the IV line

**Epidural** – through a small tube in the back

**Topical** – through the skin (patches, creams)

**Rectal** – suppository

**Other** – single injections, nerve blocks

## What are some comfort measures?

**These are things we can do to improve your child's comfort.**

Pacifiers	Sweet ease (infants)
Holding/snuggling	Rocking
Bouncy seats/swings	Massage
Comfort positioning	Bubble blowing
Music therapy	Playing/talking
Taking walks	Crafts/activities
Watching movies	Reading
Warm/cold packs	Wagon/stroller rides

## Side effects of pain medicine

**The following are side effects your child may have:**

Itching	Constipation
Drowsiness	Upset stomach
Confusion	Urinary retention

## When it hurts...

This is a guide to help you understand the pain your child may have and what you can do to help.

## What is pain?

Pain is whatever your child says it is, occurring when your child says it does.

## What is causing the pain?

Pain can be caused by a number of things including injury, trauma, or surgery. Injury to body tissue, such as bones and organs, can feel dull and achy or sharp and stabbing. Injury to nerve tissue can feel hot, burning, tingly, shooting, or stabbing. Your child can feel one or more of these sensations at the same time. Worries or fears can also add to the physical pain your child feels.