

Pain Control Advice



Barley Mow Dental Care

Unfortunately even today we are unable to instantly control any dental pain you are experiencing. Whether the pain is post-surgical, or due to a dying nerve, or the result of an abscess this sets natural body reactions in train, which cause you pain.

Often it takes at least 2-3 days for the tissue reactions that are causing the pain to subside, and in the meantime we can only advise you on what measures you can take to control the pain and endeavour to continue life as normal.

Antibiotics can control some problems, but also take 2-3 days for their full effects to be felt, especially in well established infections.

The protocols below are all given assuming that you are not sensitive or allergic to the suggested drugs. If you experience mild nausea, constipation or diarrhoea this is probably unavoidable, but rashes, peeling skin, rapid swelling or rashes are all indicative of allergy.

In this case urgently seek advice from us, your doctor's surgery or NHS Direct. If you are taking any other drugs it might be worth confirming with your pharmacist that the drugs you are buying over the counter will not interact significantly with them..

To control moderate pain a combination of paracetamol 500mg and ibuprofen 400mg every 4 to 6 hours seems to give good results. This is two each at a time of the normal doses you purchase over the counter, although they do come in this size on prescription.

Ibuprofen is cheapest bought as a generic drug, rather than labelled as Nurofen or similar. These drugs work through different mechanisms and so the two together do not cause overdose problems, and should be taken 2-3 hours apart so one begins as the other is wearing off.

To illustrate, if you start with ibuprofen 400mg at 12 noon, one would take the 500mg paracetamol at 2-3pm, and another ibuprofen at 4-6pm. The timing needs to be adjusted in light of the pain you are experiencing.

There are stronger pain killers available, but most of these are from the opioid family and will have increased side effect, which may affect your co-ordination and driving skills.

We usually suggest that if the pain is a problem at night you talk to your pharmacist; usually they suggest paracetamol or ibuprofen with codeine. If so substitute the relevant drug for the one with codeine – do not just add it on top as this could cause overdose.

Similarly do not start taking pills like they are sweets – ibuprofen can cause gastric pain and paracetamol is famous for its toxicity to the liver in high doses, particularly in alcohol abusers and those with existing liver damage.