

After a daysurgical operation

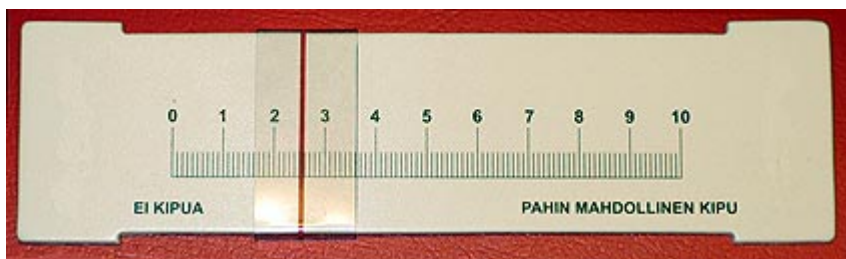
Pain

Pain always accompanies an operation, and its severity depends on the procedure and the patient's sensitivity to pain.

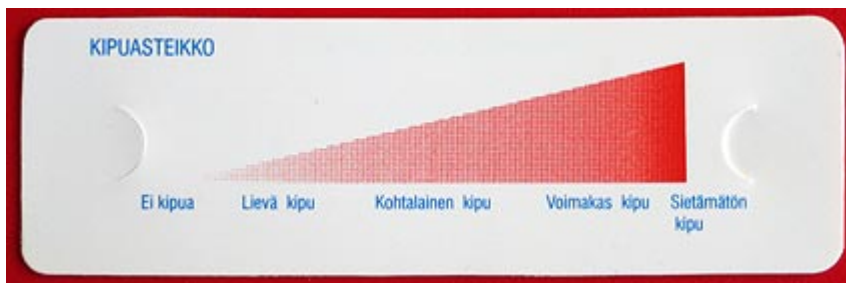
Proper pain relief helps you to recover from the surgery faster. Our aim is to minimize the patient's pain. The anaesthetic doctor and nurse take care of the pain relief depending on the patient's sensations. Pain is measured with various pain assessment tools.

Pain scales

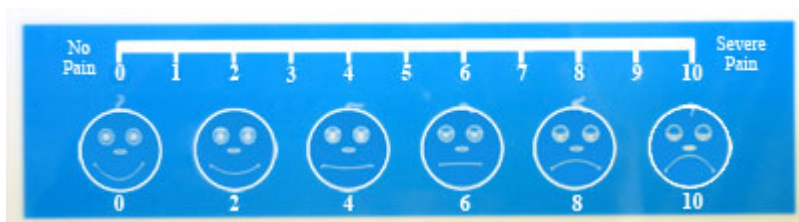
A pain scale can be a numerical rating scale, with the other extremity (0) meaning "no pain at all" and the other (10) "extremely severe pain"



The scale can also be a triangle (VAS = visual analogue scale) that can be used to display the severity of pain.



Children's pain can be measured using a scale illustrated with facial expressions.



Treatment of pain

Treatment of pain after a procedure is planned for each patient individually, according to the patient's health, allergies, and the performed surgery. Moderate and severe pain may occur at home for 1–4 days, sometimes even longer. We recommend that you have at home a sufficient amount of painkillers, which can be used safely according to the staff's instructions.

Paracetamol is a basic painkiller, which suits most patients. It comes in pills, solutions, and suppositories. It can also be injected in the hospital.

Anti-inflammatory medicines reduce swelling, inflammation, pain, and fever (e.g. ibuprofen and ketoprofen). They come in pills, solutions, and suppositories. If the lining of your stomach is sensitive, it is advisable to use medication that protects the stomach.

Paracetamol and anti-inflammatory medicines can also be taken simultaneously, which often provides the best pain relief. As a result, the need for stronger painkillers is reduced, also reducing their side-effects.

Painkillers can also be combined with various forms of anaesthesia.

The wound resulting from the surgery can be anaesthetized, rendering the area around the wound painless for a few hours.

Anaesthetizing a nerve plexus or individual nerves for the surgery also acts as pain relief after the surgery. The effects may last for as long as 12 hours.

Pain relief pumps are used, for example, in shoulder surgery. The surgeon inserts a thin plastic tube into the operated area, and an automatic pump provides the area with an anaesthetic agent evenly and sufficiently. Additional information on the pump.

If the fore mentioned forms of pain treatment do not provide sufficient pain relief, strong painkillers, opiates, are used. They are highly effective, but they have also side-effects, such as fatigue, nausea, and constipation.

NOTE!

You must not perform demanding tasks, such as driving a car or using dangerous machinery while under the influence of strong painkillers (opiates). They must not be used together with alcohol.

Nausea and vomiting

Nausea and vomiting after an operation is common. It is more usual in women than men, and in people suffering from motion sickness, and after certain procedures. The nausea can be efficiently treated with medication.

Preventing vein thrombosis

A surgery always includes a risk of vein thrombosis. The risk is significant in lengthy orthopaedic operations of the legs. It is increased by smoking, overweight, lack of exercise, varicose veins, untreated high blood pressure, heart failure, acute inflammatory disease, and hereditary coagulation disorders, and in women, hormonal treatments, such as contraceptive pills and pregnancy.

After minor procedures, moving your legs immediately after the surgery and getting up and moving from the bed as early as possible is enough for preventing vein thrombosis. Using proper support stockings increases the effectiveness of the measures.

If the likelihood of vein thrombosis is significant, preventive medication must be injected under the skin. Injecting the medicine is easy and risk-free, and you can do it yourself after being instructed by the staff. Vein thrombosis is usually formed in a vein in either of the legs, and it can cause a pulmonary embolism (a blockage of an artery in your lungs) if left untreated. A typical symptom is local pain in the calf or thigh felt especially when walking. The leg may also swell.

Symptoms of pulmonary embolism include breathing difficulties, cough, chest pain, dizziness, and accelerated heart rate. If you experience these symptoms, contact a doctor immediately.

CONTACT A DOCTOR IF

- The pain after the surgery is severe and the painkillers that we have given to you do not help.
- Severe fatigue and sleepiness, nausea, vomiting, serious stomach discomfort, itching, or severe constipation continues.
- After a spinal anaesthesia you have a severe headache that is felt especially when standing up.
- You feel pain in your calf or thigh, especially when walking.
- You have difficulties in breathing.
- You get a high fever and inflammatory symptoms on the operated or anaesthetized area (minor fever immediately after the procedure is common).