

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where do I get the Anal Dilators?

The **Anal Dilators** are supplied by the hospital and should be returned at the end of the course of treatment

How often do I use the anal dilator?

Usually once or twice a day, as directed.

How long will I continue dilatations for?

This depends on each individual child and what there surgical problem is. Your surgeon will advise you as to how long you will need to perform anal dilatations on your child.

When do I increase the anal dilator size?

Your surgeon/Nurse Specialist will instruct you as to when to go up to the next size.

REMEMBER

Ask your surgeon/ Nurse Specialist if you have any questions or worries.

If at any time you are concerned about your child please contact a member of your child's surgical team

Useful Contact Numbers:

Nurse Specialist

Additional Information

**Discharge information for
parents / carers about
ANAL DILATATION**



**Paediatric Stoma
Nurse Group**

Ward / Department: _____
Ward phone _____
Tel:----- (main switch)

WHY DO I NEED TO PERFORM ANAL DILATATIONS ON MY CHILD?

You have been asked by your surgeon to perform anal dilatations for your child in order to gradually stretch the anus and prevent it from narrowing.

The purpose of stretching the anus is so that your child will be able to pass a stool (poo) without discomfort. If the anus is too narrow your child may struggle to push poo out.

WHO WILL SHOW ME HOW TO DO ANAL DILATATIONS?

- A member of the surgical team will do the first anal dilatation and decide what size of dilator to use, how far to insert it and frequency of dilatations
- You will be shown by the specialist nurse/trained nurse how to perform the anal dilatations when your child is in hospital or when you attend the out-patient Clinic.

IS ANAL DILATATION UNCOMFORTABLE?

This can initially be a distressing procedure for the parents and child but when carried out regularly it becomes less stressful and part of your routine

If your child has had anal/rectal surgery it is recommended that pain relief be given before anal dilatations.

WHAT EQUIPMENT DO I NEED?

- Anal Dilator (appropriate size as directed by your surgeon)
- Lubricating jelly
- Nappy

HOW DO I PERFORM ANAL DILATATIONS?

- Collect equipment
- **Wash hands**
- Ensure child is comfortable and on a flat safe surface
- Remove nappy and clean buttocks with warm water
- Position child as you were shown in hospital
- You may need someone to help you hold your child to perform anal dilatations
- Apply lubricating jelly to the anal dilator, check size again.
- Hold dilator like a pencil between the fingers and thumb and insert anal dilator gently into anus approx _____ cms
- When the dilator is inside the anus hold it for a moment then remove
- Dilators should fit snugly into the anus, but should not be forced
- Following anal dilatation, clean the child's bottom thoroughly
- **Wash hands**

CARE OF THE ANAL DILATOR

- Wash anal dilator in warm soapy water
- Store in a safe place.
- Anal dilators do not need to be sterilized.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WITH ANAL DILATATION

Bleeding

- Your child may have a very small amount of bleeding following anal dilatation and/or some streaks of blood in their next poo after dilatation. This is quite common, especially if your child has had anal/rectal surgery.
- If you notice a larger amount of blood than you have been advised is normal by your surgeon/nurse, STOP anal dilatation and seek medical advice

Pain

- Your child may experience discomfort with the first anal dilatations and when increasing the dilator size to larger sizes.
- If you notice that your child has lasting pain or great discomfort seek medical advice

Insertion difficulties

- If at any time during the anal dilatation you are having difficulty with inserting the dilator do not continue as forcing the anal dilatation may cause pain. Retry again later with a smaller size as the anus may have narrowed.
- If you are having difficulties inserting the dilator contact the surgical team within 24 hours