

Children's outpatient parenteral antibiotic therapy (OPAT)

Information for patients, parents and guardians

We have given you this factsheet because your child may be able to have their antibiotic treatment at home. This is known as outpatient parenteral antibiotic therapy (OPAT). We hope this factsheet will help to answer some of the questions you may have.

Who can have OPAT?

OPAT can be used to treat young children with a range of severe infections, without the need for a long stay in hospital.

This service is for children who are clinically well but need to carry on having intravenous (IV) (through the vein) antibiotics for longer than a week and can be safely cared for outside the hospital. Not all children will be suitable for this service and we may decide that this is not the right option for your child.

Who will give my child their IV antibiotics?

In many cases, your local community nursing team will give your child their IV antibiotics at your home from Monday to Friday, and at your local ward or ambulatory clinic at weekends.

In some cases we may be able to train you to give your child their antibiotics yourself

before they leave hospital. For children who are being treated with complicated antibiotic therapy, we use innovative pump bags known as 'elastomeric devices' to give antibiotics continuously over a 24-hour period.

Before your child leaves hospital

Before your child goes home from hospital, they will need to have a secure IV line (a thin flexible tube into a vein in their arm) for their antibiotics. We will give your child a local anaesthetic (numbing the area) or a general anaesthetic (so that your child is asleep) before we insert the line, depending on your child's age and individual needs. It may be a peripherally inserted central catheter (PICC) or midline. This is so that we can give antibiotics through one of the large veins in the arm over a longer period of time. It will also mean they should be able to leave hospital sooner.

Monitoring your child

Along with your child's antibiotic therapy, we will also take weekly blood tests (via their IV line) to monitor your child's progress. Your child will have a weekly appointment at the paediatric ambulation clinic where the OPAT

nurse will assess them and give you their weekly CIVAS (pre-made antibiotics). You can then give these to the community nurse or hospital nurse who will be giving your child their antibiotics. The nurse will also ask about your child's progress and give you their test results when they are available.

When will my child finish their OPAT treatment?

When your child has completed their course of IV antibiotics and/or test results show that they can be stopped, we will remove the PICC line or midline. We will discuss this decision with your child's lead consultant before we remove the line.

If your child needs to carry on having oral (suspension/tablets) antibiotics, we will supply these. Your child's referring consultant will continue to follow up with them as needed.

Contact us

If you have any questions or worries, please contact us:

Children's OPAT team

Telephone: **07776 497313**

Monday to Friday: 8am to 4pm

Saturdays and Sundays: 9am to 1pm

Out of these hours, the telephone number will divert to the infectious diseases consultant on call who will know about your child and be able to provide you with advice.

We will also give you a telephone contact number for the community nurses or local hospital who will be giving your child their antibiotics.

For a translation of this document, or a version in another format such as easy read, large print, Braille or audio, please telephone **023 8120 4688**.

For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalneeds**

www.uhs.nhs.uk/childrenshospital

Version 1. Published December 2020. Due for review December 2023. 2849