

# Anal Dilatations

## Why do I need to perform anal dilatation on my child?

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

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

## Who will show me how to do anal dilatation?

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.



## Anal Dilatations

### What equipment do I need?

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

### How do I perform anal dilations?

- ▶ Collect equipment
- ▶ Wash hands
- ▶ Ensure your child is comfortable and on a flat safe surface
- ▶ Remove nappy and clean bottom with warm water
- ▶ Position your child as you were shown in hospital
- ▶ You may need someone to help you hold your child to perform the dilatation
- ▶ 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 bottom approx \_\_\_\_\_ cms
- ▶ When the dilator is inside the bottom hold it for a moment and then remove

- ▶ Dilators should fit snugly into the bottom and should not be forced
- ▶ Following anal dilatation, clean your child's bottom thoroughly
- ▶ Wash hands

### Care of the dilator

- ▶ Wash the 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. 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 to larger sizes.

If you notice that your child has lasting pain or great discomfort, seek medical advice.

### Insertion difficulties

If, at anytime during the anal dilatation, you are having difficulty with inserting the dilator, do not continue as forcing it may cause pain. Retry again later with smaller sizes as the anus may have narrowed.

If you are having difficulties inserting the dilator, contact the surgical team within 24 hours.



### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Where do I get the anal dilators?

These will be supplied to you 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, or as directed.

#### How long will I continue dilatation for?

This will depend on each individual child and what their surgical problem is. Your surgeon will advise you as to how long you will need to perform the dilatation for.

#### 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.

