

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How often do I use the anal dilator?

Usually twice a day, morning and night until the desired size is reached. Once this is reached and the dilator goes in easily the frequency of anal dilatations can gradually be decreased on your surgeons advice.

How long will I continue dilatations for?

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

Where do I get the Anal Dilators?

The **Anal Dilators** are supplied by the hospital. When you come to clinic they can be exchanged for the next sizes you will need.

When do I increase the anal dilator size?

The type of dilator you will be using is a **Hagar Dilator** which has a different size at each end. Your surgeon/ Clinical Nurse Specialist (Colorectal). They will instruct you as to when to go up to the next size. This is your child's specific schedule:

- **Size** __ : __/__/__ **until** __/__/__
- **Size** __ : __/__/__ **until** __/__/__
- **Size** __ : __/__/__ **until** __/__/__
- **Size** __ : __/__/__ **until** __/__/__
- **Size** __ : __/__/__ **until** __/__/__

Please return to see your Colorectal/Stoma CNS on the following dates:

- __/__/__ @ __: __ hrs
- __/__/__ @ __: __ hrs
- __/__/__ @ __: __ hrs

REMEMBER Ask your surgeon / Clinical Nurse Specialist (Colorectal), if you have any questions or worries.

Colorectal/ Stoma Clinical Nurse Specialist

Stephanie Orr & Ann Costigan

01 409 6100 / Bleep 752

01 409 6686

Additional instructions

Developed by Developed by Stephanie Orr & Ann Costigan
Colorectal/ Stoma Clinical Nurse Specialist

Date issued March 2020 / Date of review: March 2023

Disclaimer & Copyright ©2020, Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin, Dublin 12. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the copyright holder. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information provided is accurate and in accord with standards accepted at the time of printing.



Children's Health Ireland
at Crumlin

DISCHARGE INFORMATION FOR PARENTS / GUARDIANS ABOUT

ANAL DILATATION



Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin

Phone: 01 409 6100

MAIN SWITCH: 01 409 6100

CNS Bleep: 752

CNS Office: 01 409 6752

Ward:

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 it will gradually become the correct size for your child to pass a normal stool(poo).If it is too small your baby may become constipated and struggle to push poo out.

WHO WILL SHOW ME HOW TO DO ANAL DILATATIONS?

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

IS ANAL DILATATION UNCOMFORTABLE?

This can initially be distressing for both parents and baby/toddler, but soon becomes less stressful as you become more confident and your baby/toddler gets used to it.

WHAT EQUIPMENT DO I NEED?

- Anal (**Hagar**) Dilator (appropriate size as directed by your surgeon)
- Water based lubricant
- Wipes
- Clean nappy
- Barrier cream

HOW DO I PERFORM ANAL DILATATIONS?

- Collect equipment
- **Wash hands** with soap and warm water, and dry thoroughly
- Ensure child is relaxed, comfortable and on a flat safe surface
- Remove nappy and clean buttocks
- Position child as you were shown in hospital
- You may need someone to help you hold your child to perform anal dilatations
- Apply Water based lubricant to the anal dilator, check size again.
- Hold dilator like a pencil between the fingers and thumb and insert anal dilator gently into anus to approx _____cms.
- Gently press anal dilator down for about 5 seconds and when still pressing down slowly and gently remove dilator
- Dilators should fit snugly into the anus, but should not be forced
- Following anal dilatation, clean the infants buttocks thoroughly and apply barrier cream of choice
- **Wash hands, as above**



CARE OF THE ANAL DILATATOR

- Wash anal dilator after each use
- Wash in warm soapy water
- Dry with a paper towel
- Store in a dry, safe place.
- Anal dilators do not need to be sterilised.



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 contact the number provided or your GP where further advice will be given.

Pain

- Your child may experience discomfort with anal dilatations usually when increasing the dilator size to larger sizes. This should subside over a few days as the anus stretches.
- If you notice that your child is experiencing pain or great discomfort **STOP** anal dilatations and contact as above.

Insertion difficulties

- If at any time during the anal dilatation, you are having difficulty with inserting the dilator, **STOP**. Forcing the anal dilatation will cause pain. The anus may have narrowed and you will need to go back to a smaller size. Contact the above number for further advice.