



Children's
Healthcare
Canada

Santé
des enfants
Canada



solutions for kids in pain
pour la douleur chez les enfants

November 8, 2022
Ottawa, ON-

Statement on the National Shortage of Children's Analgesics

Canada is currently experiencing a shortage of children's pain and fever medications, triggered by both supply- and demand-related dynamics. Children and families are turning to family physicians, pediatricians, pharmacies, and emergency departments as they struggle to manage their child's fever or pain symptoms at home.

Children's healthcare systems across the country have been under tremendous strain, even prior to the shortages of children's analgesics. An especially difficult viral season (including influenza, RSV and other common viruses), shortages of highly specialized children's healthcare providers, and long queues for surgical, mental health, and diagnostic interventions mean children's hospitals are dealing with unprecedented challenges, only exacerbated by the lack of over-the-counter pain medications. Many children's hospitals across the country are operating at or dangerously above their capacity to safely deliver care.

Children's Healthcare Canada and Solutions for Kids in Pain recognize how stressful it can be for families to have a child in discomfort. Sources of reliable and credible information on pain management are available to help guide families attempting to manage pain at home. The [Solutions for Kids in Pain](#) network has several evidence-based resources intended specifically for children. Many children's hospitals also have useful information, which can be found on their websites, to share with families.

Children's Healthcare Canada and the [Solutions for Kids in Pain](#) network are issuing the following recommendations to the Federal Government to immediately address the shortages of analgesics and improve health outcomes for children and youth:

1. Establish strategic reserves of essential over-the-counter and prescription medicines for children; These reserves should be managed in coordination with provinces and territories;
2. Develop and coordinate a communications response for hospitals and children's healthcare professionals to provide timely updates on supply and the national response;
3. Coordinate family-focused education and communications outlining when pain medications are required, other safe and effective interventions that might be appropriate, and the importance of immunizations and masking to protect children and youth.
4. Coordinate a national campaign to ensure children and youth prioritize immunization and other protections, such as masking, against COVID-19, the flu, and other infectious diseases (routine childhood immunizations).

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