

Towards a comprehensive improvement in pediatric post-surgical care

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Postsurgical care in pediatrics represents a multidimensional challenge that transcends the surgical act, integrating medical, emotional, and family aspects. This approach is crucial to ensuring the safety and well-being of pediatric patients undergoing surgery since their recovery depends on the procedure's success and adequate care in the postoperative period.

The available evidence underscores the importance of an interdisciplinary approach from the operating room to the home. Effective postoperative pain control is critical to the well-being of the pediatric patient. Pain assessment scales adapted to children allow more precise and effective analgesic interventions. In addition, non-pharmacologic techniques, such as positional changes or the presence of comforting objects, can contribute to pain relief.¹

Another key aspect is the prevention of respiratory and cardiovascular complications, especially in highly complex surgeries or patients with comorbidities. Strategies such as respiratory physiotherapy, continuous monitoring, and adequate fluid management are essential to minimize risks and ensure a favorable evolution.²

The management of infectious complications is another crucial point in pediatric postsurgical care. The implementation of strict aseptic measures,

the adequate use of prophylactic and therapeutic antibiotics, and active surveillance to detect early signs of infection are fundamental. An early and multidisciplinary approach to infections, such as surgical abscesses or sepsis, significantly improves clinical outcomes.²

Postoperative nutrition also plays a determining role in recovery. Adequate nutritional support contributes to wound healing, strengthens the immune system, and improves the patient's general condition. This requires a personalized plan that considers each child's specific needs and the type of surgery performed.³

Beyond the physical aspects, the emotional impact of the surgical process on the patient and family should not be underestimated. The incorporation of psychoprophylaxis strategies can reduce stress and anxiety, promoting better adherence to treatment and more satisfactory clinical outcomes. This holistic approach reinforces the importance of considering the child as an integral being whose needs go beyond strictly medical.⁴

Surgical psychoprophylaxis reduces the use of analgesics in the postoperative period and improves the patient's cooperation during recovery.

In this context, health teams must adopt an

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evidence-based approach based on international best practices and adapt them to the needs of their clients' local specificities. In addition, continuous training and research in pediatric postsurgical care will improve clinical outcomes and patients' quality of life.

The recent *National Consensus on Postsurgical Care and Complications in Pediatrics*,⁵ prepared by leading Sociedad Argentina de Pediatría specialists, marks a significant advance in this field, establishing a framework of reference based on evidence and local experience. The document highlights the importance of an interdisciplinary approach that guarantees continuity of care from the operating room to the home, emphasizing key areas such as pain management, prevention of respiratory and cardiovascular complications, and postoperative nutrition. It also incorporates specific guidelines for the type of surgery and practical tools, such as pain assessment scales adapted to the pediatric population.

One of the consensus's most relevant contributions is incorporating psychoprophylaxis strategies, which not only address the patient's emotional impact, but also actively involve the family in the recovery process. This holistic approach is key to reducing stress, optimizing treatment adherence, and improving clinical outcomes.

Through this consensus, the Sociedad Argentina de Pediatría provides a solid, updated guideline that benefits health professionals. It reinforces the commitment to the safety and well-being of children and adolescents undergoing surgery. We invite the entire pediatric community to join this effort, promoting the implementation of these recommendations in daily practice and encouraging future research that will continue to enrich this field. ■

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