

Acetaminophen Can Ease Infant's Surgical Pain

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When very young babies have major surgery, intravenous acetaminophen can reduce the need for morphine, researchers reported.

In a randomized trial, postoperative acetaminophen, delivered four times a day, relieved pain as well as continuous morphine, according to Saskia de Wildt, MD, PhD, of Erasmus Medical Center–Sophia Children's Hospital in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, and colleagues.

The finding suggests that intravenous acetaminophen might be "an interesting alternative as primary analgesic in neonates and infants," they wrote in the Jan. 9 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Opioid therapy is widely used to control pain in infants and newborns having major surgery, but it can have significant adverse effects, including respiratory depression, the researchers noted.

Because of that, there has been interest in other forms of analgesia, including acetaminophen, they added.

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