Contact details

If you have any questions or concerns please contact
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Advanced Nurse Practitioners
023 8079 4991 or
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ask for bleep 2641
or
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or your GP
What are ‘K’ Wires?
‘K’ (Kirschener) wires are surgical wires that are used to hold a fracture in a corrected position. This procedure is performed under a general anaesthetic. (the use of medicine that makes you go to sleep)

The wires stick out of the skin so that they can be easily removed once the fracture has healed. They are covered with padding and a plaster cast and your child will not be able to see or feel them.

When are ‘K’ wires removed?
The wires are normally removed after about four to six weeks.

Preparing your child

General anaesthetic
You will receive information in the post. This will include the date and time, where to go and from what time your child can have nothing to eat before coming to the hospital and being given the anaesthetic. After the wires have been taken out your child will return to the ward. They will usually have another plaster cast or a bandage to support the limb for a further two weeks. You will be able to go home on the same day.

Removal in clinic
It is important that your child understands what should happen. Before you come to the clinic you may wish to give your child some paracetamol in preparation for the procedure. Please read the instructions on the bottle before giving your child paracetamol.

An X-ray may be needed to confirm the fracture has healed enough for the wires to be removed. The plaster cast will then be removed in the plaster room. This does not hurt but the noise and vibration of the plaster saw can be alarming for young children.

Once the cast and dressing has been removed the wires can be seen sticking out of the skin. Reassure your child that this is normal. Entonox (gas and air) may be used for pain relief. The nurse will explain to your child how to use this and how it works. The sites around the wires are cleaned, before they are removed using special pliers. This procedure is quick and may feel strange, but is not usually too uncomfortable.

The small wounds will bleed a little bit and dressings are placed over these before a new plaster cast is put on. This stays on for a further two weeks.

Are there any problems?
Sometimes it is not possible to remove the wires in clinic. If this is the case a date will be arranged for you to bring your child into hospital for the wires to be taken out under a general anaesthetic.

Aftercare
Your child will be given an outpatient appointment for two weeks time, for the plaster cast to be taken off. At this appointment they will be shown exercises to get normal strength and movement back and advised not to play any contact sports for a further four to six weeks.