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## **Getting back to basics: easing pain with paracetamol in the emergency ward**

Simple pain relief like paracetamol and ibuprofen should be the first course of action for many patients in hospital emergency wards before stronger, more complicated analgesics are introduced, a meeting of anaesthetists will hear in Queensland this weekend.

Anaesthetist Dr David Rowe, convenor of the meeting “Pain – proven performers and potential pioneers”, said paracetamol was an effective source of pain relief with few side-effects - unlike medications like codeine and other opiates.

“It is one of the most commonly-used drugs and has an excellent safety record,” Dr Rowe said.

“The key is to use it with other sources of pain relief.”

Dr Rowe will tell the meeting that emergency doctors often disregarded over-the-counter pain relief for patients, even though paracetamol and ibuprofen were very useful first-line treatments.

If a patient needed further pain relief, using paracetamol reduced the amount of stronger pain relief needed.

“Stronger drugs like codeine cause side effects in many patients but they aren’t always necessary for optimal pain relief,” he said.

Research showed that in some procedures, such as dental work, paracetamol was more effective for pain than stronger drugs.

“There are options for patients that have very few side-effects, no risk of addiction and are effective that are not used widely enough.”

For further information or to interview Dr Rowe or other speakers please contact ANZCA Media Manager Ebru Yaman on +61 857 5303, +61 408 259 369 or email [eyaman@anzca.edu.au](mailto:eyaman@anzca.edu.au)