Your Nerve Block & Home Pump For Arm/Hand Surgery

Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine

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Why? To Help Control Postoperative Pain at Home

- A pump connected to plastic tubing will deliver medication to the nerves that go to your surgical wound to numb the pain.

Note: Your nerve block home pump infuses medication around the nerve and is not a pain pump directed into your joint.
Locations of Tubing Placement

• A thin tubing will be placed above or below your collar bone (on the same side as your surgery).
The Tubing (Catheter)

• The tubing will be placed while you are under sedation before your surgery

• This should **not** be a painful procedure

• An Ultrasound machine may be used to guide the procedure

• Placement usually takes about 15 minutes
The Tubing is Secured

- Tubing is well secured with surgical adhesive tape and a clear dressing
- If the tubing comes out, it cannot be replaced and the pump will no longer infuse medication to the site
Tubing Attachments

- The site is covered with a clear dressing and secured with an anchoring device.

The exact layout may vary.
How It Works

The goal is to keep your pain under control with:

- The home pump
- Oral pain medications as directed by your surgeon

It is normal to experience some pain
What to Expect

• You may experience numbness, tingling and weakness in your arm and/or hand on the same side as the home pump (same as the surgical side)

• Some people find this unpleasant

This is **normal**

• These issues will be resolved soon after the pump is turned off
Precautions

• The numbness may affect your balance

• You must ask your caregiver to assist you when walking or moving around, such as when going to the bathroom
Prevent Injury

• The limb could be injured by sharp objects or heat and you may not notice it because it is numb
• Keep the limb in a natural position (use the sling provided)
• When lying down keep the limb elevated
• Do not sleep on the limb
• Change the position of the limb regularly
• Avoid applying pressure or heat on the limb

Protect the limb like a baby
The Pump

Medication:

• Ropivacaine 0.2% runs continuously at a preset rate

• For an extra dose **push**

• The arrow buttons are OFF and will not give any medication
The Pump Display

The pump display consists of five (5) lines:
1. If the pump is on or off
2. The drug concentration (%)
3. The flow rate (ml/hour)
4. The extra dose (bolus) amount (ml)
5. “Lockout” period: time remaining before another extra dose can be requested

You may be asked to read these numbers during the follow up phone call from Inpatient Adult Pain Service.
If Tubing Kinks

- If the tubing kinks, “BLOCKAGE” will appear on the display of the pump.

Check for kinked tubing and undo the kink.
Keep the Pump Dry

- Do NOT get the pump wet
- Do NOT get your wound (surgical and block area) wet
Check the Dressing Daily

- Look for loose dressing
- Look for leakage, redness, pus and/or bleeding
- **Do not replace the dressing**
  - Add more tape if needed to secure it
- If the tubing becomes completely uncovered where it enters the skin, the home pump must be stopped and the tubing removed. Then call the Inpatient Adult Pain Service at 503 494-8311 and ask for the Physician On-Call.
Leaks

• The Dressing may leak:
  – Clear liquid (medication)
  – Could be reddish in color

  • **THIS IS OK**

• **Do not remove the dressing.** A towel or pad can be used to carefully dry the outside of the dressing and/or the surrounding area.

• If the leakage is bothersome:
  – Stop the pump for one (1) hour then restart it
How to Stop the Pump

Press and hold the red button for at least 5 seconds

Press the red button again for 5 seconds to turn the pump back on

The “drip” will resume
Signs of Possible Abnormal Drug Reaction

- Ringing/rumbling in your ear(s)
- Metallic/funny taste or numbness in your mouth or lips
- Dizziness, agitation, nervousness
- Irregular breathing or heartbeat
- Shortness of breath or chest pain

*If you notice any of these symptoms:*
STOP THE PUMP IMMEDIATELY.
CALL OHSU (503 494-8311) and ask for the Physician On-Call in the Inpatient Adult Pain Service. IF YOUR SYMPTOMS ARE SEVERE, CALL 911
Before Removing the Tubing

2.

- Wait until your limb is not numb to remove the catheter,

- **Do not cut the catheter.**

- Stop if you experience pain during removal.
How to Remove the Tubing

Do not remove the catheter until your limb is no longer numb.

1. Wash hands,
2. Gently remove all dressings and adhesive tapes,
3. Grasp the tubing at the skin and gently pull the tubing out of the skin. Approximately 2 or 3 inches of the tubing will come out, and it should come out easily and without pain. Once the tubing is out, cover the small entry point with a Band-Aid.
Problems?

- Do not know what to do?
- Are you experiencing pain during the removal?
- Is the tubing stuck?

**STOP**

**DO NOT CUT TUBING**

CALL OHSU (503 494-8311): ask for the Physician On-Call in the Inpatient Adult Pain Service
Follow Up

• You will receive a phone call at home to check on your home pump the day after you leave the hospital

• Should you have concerns or experience any difficulties with your home pump, please call OHSU at 503 494-8311 and ask for the Physician On-Call in the Inpatient Adult Pain Service

• If you have pain issues, call your surgeon
Pain Control at Home

• It is normal for the numbness to decrease with time
• It is normal to regain some muscle strength with time
• It is normal to experience more pain with time
• The home pump will help with pain control, but does not always cover all of the pain.
If Your Pain is Poorly Controlled

- Push on the pump for an extra dose of pump medication, not the arrow buttons.
- If this is not enough, take pain pills as prescribed by your surgeon (it is ok to combine the pump medication with the pain pills).
- If the pain is still not properly controlled or you have a question about your surgical wound, please call your surgeon.
Important Reminders

• Do not cut tubing

• Protect the limb like a baby

• Ask for assistance to walk and move around
Questions?

• If you have questions please ask the PAT Clinic staff
• If you have not been shown a pump, please ask to see one
• You will receive a pamphlet with key information and contact phone numbers to read at home
• More information is available online at: www.happypatient.org