

Managing a Nerve Block and Pain Pump At Home

Your child is going home with a “pain pump.” The pump delivers a numbing pain medicine called **Ropivacaine**. It is the local anesthetic that blocks the nerve that senses the pain in the surgical area.

How does the pain pump deliver the medicine?

The pain pump delivers medicine all of the time in small amounts.

While the pump is in use:

- Make sure there are no leaks from the system.
- Make sure the tubing is not kinked.
- If the pump should fall and break, stop the medicine flow by pinching off the tube with the clamp. Call your doctor.
- Do not get the pump or the catheter site/dressing wet.

Who should I call if I have any questions or concerns?

- The Acute Pain Service nurse or doctor will call you daily while the nerve block is in place. If you have any questions or concerns you may call us at any time:
 - Monday – Friday, 8am – 4pm, call 414-266-2775, press number 4, and ask for the acute pain service nurse practitioner. That nurse practitioner will call you back.
 - After 4pm, weekends and holidays, call 414-266-2000 and ask for the Doctor On-Call for Chronic/Outpatient Pain to be paged. That doctor will call you back.
- Dr. _____ is an anesthesiologist who will help you manage the nerve block pump once you are at home. Call _____ or page _____ with any questions or concerns at any time while the pump is in place.

What symptoms should I watch for?

There may be some weakness, numbness, or tingling in the area affected by the nerve block. Call the Pain Service if symptoms are bothering your child or interfering with activity.

- Take extra safety measures to prevent falls at home.
- Your child may be weak or numb at the surgery site. Help your child get out of a bed or chair, to walk, or to get dressed. Follow the surgeon’s guidelines for activity and walking.
- Do not put any pressure on a numb or weak area. Have your child stay away from sharp surfaces or extreme heat or cold. Because your child may not feel them and could get injured. Some fluid may leak from the site. Most often, if your child is comfortable, this is not a problem. Call us if there is a lot of fluid.

Call us immediately if your child has any of these symptoms

- Metallic taste in their mouth.

- Numbness around the mouth or lips.
- Ear noises or ringing in the ears.
- Restlessness, twitching, or tremors.
- Dizziness, lightheadedness, drowsiness, blurred vision.
- Skin rash or hives.
- Increased pain that does not get better with the button dose.
- Redness, swelling, pain or cloudy discharge at catheter site.
- Seizure (**call 911 immediately**).

How do I remove the nerve block catheter?

The pain service nurse or doctor will call you the day the catheter is to be removed. They may stay on the phone while you remove the catheter. Follow these instructions:

1. Wash your hands well with soap and water.
2. Gently pull off the dressing and any tape used to hold the catheter in place. Start at any corner and pull toward the catheter. Do not cut the catheter!
3. Firmly grasp the catheter at the skin level. Pull gently away from your child's body. Tell us if there is any difficulty pulling it out.
4. Look for a blue or black marking, or metal at the tip of the catheter. Tell us if there is no marking or metal tip.
5. Use a band aid to cover the site. No ointment or antiseptic at the site is needed.
6. Throw away the pump and catheter in your household trash.
7. Wash your hands well with soap and water.

We may call you again the day after you remove the catheter. Call the pain doctor at any time if you notice redness, warmth, pain, more drainage or swelling where the catheter was in place.

Precautions

- Do not reuse the disposable pump; it is for single use only.
- If the surgeon says it is ok to take a shower, keep the disposable pump outside of the shower or in a waterproof bag.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.