**Regional Anesthesia**

**Single Shot Nerve Block Post-Op Instructions**

**General Facts**

* You have had a nerve block placed for pain control after surgery. This means you have received a shot of local anesthetic that bathes specific nerves in your body. The local anesthetic is numbing medicine intended to reduce the amount of pain that you experience from your surgery or injury.
* It is **NORMAL** for your arm/leg on the side you had surgery to feel numb for 6-24 hours. It may feel heavy, tingly and/or weak.
* It is **NORMAL** for the medicine to begin to wear off between 6 and 24 hours after it was placed. In most patients, the medicine begins to wear off after around 12 hours. Frequently, once it begins to wear off, the pain comes back very quickly. **Take your pain pills once you notice this,** since it takes about 30-60 minutes for the pills to take effect.
* It is **NORMAL** to have to take your pain pills more frequently once the numbness wears off.
* Often the nerve block can wear off in the middle of the night, therefore, even if you still have numbness tonight, we recommend taking your pain pills (as prescribed by your doctor) before going to bed.
* It is normal for the nerve block to not take away all of your pain. You may need to take some of your pain pills prescribed by your doctor even if the nerve block is working. Tylenol or anti-inflammatory medication like ibuprofen may be all that you need. If not, take your pain pills. Take all of these medications as instructed by your doctor.

**Safety Precautions for single shot nerve block (Do’s and Don’ts)**

* **DO NOT** drive or operate dangerous machinery while your limb is still numb. The local anesthetic can numb the nerves to the muscles in your arm/leg. This can make it difficult to control your arm or leg while the local anesthetic medicine is still working.
* **DO** keep your sling and/or brace on while you are still numb; unless doing physical therapy. Afterwards, use your sling/or brace as prescribed by your surgeon.
* **DO NOT** apply pressure, heat, or cold on your numb areas except as directed by your doctors. The local anesthetic will reduce your sensation and you may not realize your limb is being injured by heat, cold or pressure. **Protect the limb like a baby!**
* If you had a nerve block for surgery on your leg or foot, **DO NOT bear weight or walk using the affected leg** without assistance until your sensation has come back. **The local anesthetic can make the limb weak. If you have had a nerve block affecting your leg, ask for help before rising or walking to avoid falling.**
* In the next 24-48 hours, **DO** check the site where the nerve block injection was done. Look for redness, swelling, excessive tenderness or pus (anything that looks like the area is becoming infected). ***If these signs are present, call the Home Pump Physician On-Call at the number below****.*  It may be necessary to have a doctor look at it.

**When you should call IMMEDIATELY**

**\*\*\*Ask for the On-Call Home-Pump Doctor\*\*\***

* Injection site has signs of infection (as described on Page 1)
* Ringing/rumbling in your ear(s)
* Metallic/funny taste or numbness in your mouth or on your lips
* Dizziness, agitation, nervousness
* Hives
* Irregular breathing or heartbeat
* Shortness of breath or chest pain

**IF YOUR SYMPTOMS ARE SEVERE, CALL 911**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

* **Can I take my pain pills now, even though I am still numb?**

**Yes**. There is no interaction between the local anesthetic we gave you and the pain pills you were prescribed. You will need to use your pain pills, especially once the numbness wears off.

* **I am still having some numbness even after 24 hours, is this normal?**

It is somewhat common to still have some numbness after receiving a nerve block; however, it can be a sign of something more serious. If this is the case, call and ask for the On-Call Home Pump Physician. Also, contact your surgeon, as this could also be a problem related to your surgery/injury.

* **I am still having some pain despite having some numbness, is this normal?**

**Yes**. It is **NORMAL** to experience some pain despite having a nerve block; especially when it is wearing off. Take your pain pills as prescribed by your surgeon.

* **Do I need to cover the injection site with any dressing or Band-Aid?**

**No**. The injections site is very small and will heal on its own.

* **Can I take a shower after a single shot peripheral nerve block?**

**Yes**. As long as the block has worn off and someone can help you with balance and moving around.

**QUESTIONS?**

Call and ask for the On-Call Home Pump Physician