



fraserhealth

IV PCA-Adult Patient Information Handout

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Pain after Surgery

Pain after Surgery is expected. But, if you are in too much pain and not able to take deep breaths, cough or move and walk, you may not heal as fast! You are given pain medicine after surgery:

- To keep you comfortable so that you can deep breath, cough, sleep and walk.
- To get you home as soon as you can!

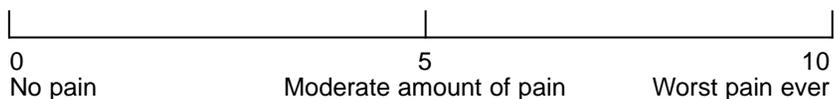
Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA)

After surgery, you will be given pain medicine through a pump. When you feel pain, you can press a button to give yourself a small dose of pain medicine. This pump is usually started before you leave the recovery room.

How PCA Works

The pump is set to give you a safe amount of pain medicine. The pump is also set to give you a safe number of doses each hour so that you cannot give yourself too much. Only you know when you hurt and when to push the button. ***You are the only person that can press the PCA button.***

The nurses will ask you to rate your pain on a 0 - 10 scale. A rating of 0 means you feel no pain at all, 5 means you feel a moderate amount of pain, and 10 means you feel the worst pain you can.



Side Effects of PCA

As with any medicine, there are side effects. It is important to tell the nurse and/or physician if you have any of these side effects.

- Itching - this is not an allergic reaction but a common side effect of pain medicine.
- Nausea - feeling queasy can also occur from pain medicine.
- Difficulty urinating - some people have trouble urinating but this usually goes away after a day or so.
- Constipation - pain medicine can slow the bowel causing constipation. You may be given medicine so this does not happen.
- Extreme drowsiness and slowed breathing - these are the most serious side effects but also the least common. Less than 1% of people will have this side effect. This side effect develops slowly and nurses will be checking you frequently. If seen, both can be easily treated by lowering the dose of pain medicine.

Other Medicines Used to Manage Pain

You may also have suppositories or pills on a regular schedule to help with the pain. These may include Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and anti-inflammatory medicine, this will depend on the type of surgery you had and what your physician feels is best for you.