

## Managing your Nerve Block at Home

Both your surgeon & anesthesiologist agree that a continuous nerve block is a good way to reduce your pain at home after your surgery.

The following is information regarding how to care for the nerve block.

Remove your nerve block catheter on: \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm

**Contact Number  
416-967-8500**

**-Weekdays, 8AM to 4:30PM: ask for the Acute Pain Service to be paged.  
-Evenings and Weekends: ask for Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ to be paged**

### What is a continuous nerve block?

A nerve block means blocking the nerve supply to part of the body, such as an arm, so the patient cannot feel pain in that area. Local anesthetic ("freezing") is the medicine used to manage pain. A continuous nerve block is a nerve block that provides local anesthetic medicine to manage pain for 48 hours.

### What should I expect?

The local anesthetic will make your arm very numb at first. Over time this numbness will decrease but your arm will not feel normal until the nerve block catheter is removed. You must be aware that the arm or hand may be injured without you feeling pain. **Please carefully protect your arm & hand.** Because your arm will not work properly it is important not to drive a car, and do not try to put weight on the arm.

### How much pain will I have?

You are receiving local anesthetic through a small catheter (tube) near your nerves to help with your pain after surgery.

All pain from the surgery may not be completely relieved by the nerve block and **you will likely need to take pain medication by mouth.**

### What pain medicine do I take at home?

---

---

---

---

---

### What should I watch for?

Do not wet the nerve block catheter dressing. Contact us with any questions or if you have any of the following:

- redness, tenderness, swelling, or drainage at the nerve block catheter site
- ringing in your ears, metallic taste in your mouth, tingling around your face or mouth;
- a significant change in pain or numbness
- shortness of breath that is new
- if the catheter is disconnected from the bottle



Empty

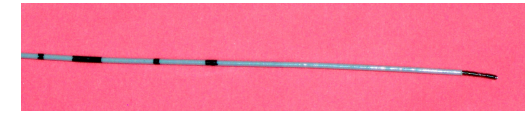
Full

### How do I take the nerve block catheter out?

You will be removing the nerve block catheter at home. A doctor or nurse will contact you by telephone and be available for any questions at the time you remove the catheter.

### Instructions:

1. Wash your hands. Lift the clear dressing off the catheter insertion site. The only discomfort you should feel is from the tape coming off.
2. Hold the nerve block catheter and gently pull it out. It should not be difficult to remove the catheter and there should be no discomfort when removing the catheter. You are looking for a grey metallic colour tip at the end of the catheter to confirm you have removed the whole thing.



Grey metallic tip

3. A small amount of blood or fluid drainage from the insertion site is normal. You may hold pressure over the site where the catheter was removed for 5 – 10 minutes then apply a band-aid to the area. The band-aid may be removed later on the same day.
4. Throw the dressing, pump, tubing, and nerve block catheter in the garbage.
5. You may wash the catheter insertion site with soap and water as needed.
6. The numbness in the arm or hand should resolve over the 12 – 24 hours after removal of the nerve block catheter.  
**Please call us if your arm is still numb after 24 hours.**
7. Following catheter removal you can continue to take your oral pain medicine as needed.