



# Pain Management after a Regional Block

(Discharge instructions for admitted patients)

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## What is a regional block?

A regional block is a procedure, performed by an anesthesiologist, to provide pain relief after surgery. A numbing medication is injected near the site of surgery, around the nerves, to decrease sensation to the area where the surgical procedure is performed.

**An anesthesiologist** is a medical doctor who specializes in giving drugs to control pain before, during, and after surgery.

## How long will the regional block last?

Each patient has a different response to the medication during the regional block. Depending on the amount and strength of the medication used, a regional block can last from 12 to 24 hours.

## What to expect after the block wears off?

After the block gradually wears off, you will regain all feeling to the surgical area. Unfortunately, this may occur overnight.

## How do I manage my pain when my pain increases?

Based on your surgical procedure, you will receive prescriptions for several pain medications. The best way to manage your pain is to start taking some medication before the block wears off. The medication will work best if you take it at a schedule time. This will allow an effective level of medication to remain in your system. The following is a recommended pain management plan:

1. Start by taking your pain medication as prescribed. If approved by your surgeon, you may take your first dose prior to surgery.
2. If you have a history of nausea after surgery, you may want to mention this to your doctor. You may need additional medication to treat an upset stomach before you take pain medication by mouth.
3. We recommend that you start taking your prescribed pain medication, such as Vicodin®, or Oxycodone®, within 8- 10 hours after your block procedure, before the block wears off.
4. You may also need to wake up the first night of surgery to take your medication. This will maintain the amount of medication in your system and prevent your pain from getting out of control.
5. Elevate the affected area to decrease, and possibly prevent, swelling.
6. If your surgeon allows, you may apply ice to the surgical area.

### **What do I do if my pain is not under control?**

If you are unable to control your pain with the prescribed medications, call the hospital operator at 734-936-4000. Ask to speak to the Resident from the surgery team that performed your procedure.

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