



Peripheral Nerve Catheter Discharge Instructions

How do I Care for my catheter at home?

- Keep the dressing over the catheter clean and dry. Do not take a bath or shower while the catheter is in place.
- Some leaking of local anesthetic under the clear dressing is normal. You may add another clear dressing or tape to the area to help keep it in place.
- Check all connections to your pump each morning and each evening. Keep them tight and keep the tubing free of any kink. If the catheter becomes disconnected from the pump accidentally, throw the pump away and remove your catheter.

How do I make sure my catheter remains in place?

- If the catheter is for hand or arm surgery, use a sling to keep your arm close to your body. If the catheter is for your leg or knee, use a brace to limit weight bearing.
- Check your strength before getting up to walk to prevent falls
- Protect your numb area by keeping it close to your body.
- Be careful with heat and cold packs as they can damage your skin without you being aware of it. Keep ice away from the bottle infusion pump.

In the unlikely event that you would need an MRI while the catheter is in place, you should contact the Acute Pain team at the number below. You may be required to remove it prior to your MRI. If you are unable to contact the Acute Pain service in a timely fashion, you should simply pull out the catheter, per the instructions below.

How does the catheter come out?

The infusion should continue for about 2 days, or approximately 48 hours, from when the disposable pump is connected. The morning of the third day after surgery you will remove the catheter.

Sit down to remove your catheter. In addition, you may want to have a friend, or family member assist with catheter removal. Take off the dressings over the catheter. Do not use scissors. Firmly grasp the catheters at the skin. With gentle, steady pulling, slide

Department of Anesthesiology
Regional Pain Management Program
734-936-4280 or 734-615-PAIN

the catheter out from underneath the skin. You will feel minimal or no discomfort. The catheter should come out easily. If you feel any sudden sharp or shooting pain when you begin to pull, **STOP** and call the on-call doctor or nurse. (See number below). The catheter and bottle pump are disposable; simply throw them in the trash once you take the catheter out. **If you have an electronic pump, your home nurse will collect it from you after the catheter is removed.** You may place a small bandage over the spot where the catheter came out.

Remove your catheter as described above on: _____

When do I call a doctor?

Call a doctor if you have the following signs and symptoms:

- Numb or tingling lips or mouth
- Ringing in the ears; a metal taste in your mouth
- Redness or swelling at the catheter site
- Difficulty breathing; and/or dizziness

How to contact someone for questions about your catheter once it is in place

Call the hospital operator at 734-936-4000. Ask to speak to the Acute Pain Fellow, or Nurse, at pager number 9031. If they are not immediately available, leave your contact information and the nurse or doctor will call you back.

While your catheter is in place, a doctor will contact you each day by telephone to make sure your catheter is working safely.

Disclaimer: This document contains information and/or instructional materials developed by the University of Michigan Health System (UMHS) for the typical patient with your condition. It may include links to online content that was not created by UMHS and for which UMHS does not assume responsibility. It does not replace medical advice from your health care provider because your experience may differ from that of the typical patient. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about this document, your condition or your treatment plan.

Reviewers: Andrew Dering, MD; Paul Hilliard, MD, MS; Susan Holmes-Walker, PhD, RN
Andrew Dering, MD; and Mohit Rastogi, MD.

Patient Education by [University of Michigan Health System](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License](#). Last Revised 9/2014