

A note to your Family and Friends.

PCA is proven to be an effective way to control post operative pain.

It is important that only the patient press the control button.

If you have any concerns or questions about this procedure please call the nurse.

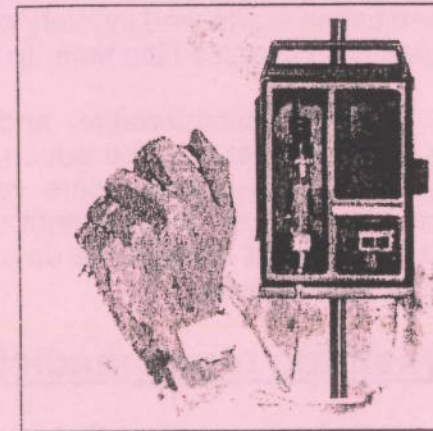
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Patient Information



Interior Health

Patient Controlled Analgesia



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What is PCA

Patient-Controlled Analgesia or PCA, for short allows you some control over how much pain medication you receive. Instead of ringing for the nurse when you need pain medicine, you'll push the button on a PCA pump. When you push the button, you'll receive a small dose of pain medicine through your intravenous (IV).

How much medication will I receive?

Your doctor and nurse will make sure the PCA pump is set to deliver the right dose.

If you feel some discomfort and want relief, just **press and release** the button. To control your pain so that you're comfortable, the medication starts working very quickly -- usually within minutes -- so give it a little time "to work".

When you start to feel uncomfortable and need more medication, simply press and release the button again. Built-in timers on the PCA pump will make sure your doses are safely timed during your course of treatment. You receive **only the medication you need** through the day, as prescribed by your doctor. **No more, no less.**

Can I give myself too much medicine?

The PCA pump is specially designed so that you **cannot** give yourself more medication than your doctor thinks is right for you. You use it only to deliver medication when you **have** pain.

Even the push button control is special. Rolling over on it when you're asleep **won't** make the PCA pump work. You have to **push the button** with your thumb or finger and then **release it** give yourself any medication. If you do become sleepy or drowsy, try to wait awhile until you begin to feel definite discomfort before you push the button again.

Remember:

**Try to find the comfortable balance.
When you find it, you'll know it at once.
Work to stay there.**

The nurses will assess you regularly. They will ask you to rate your pain on a scale of 0 - 10 (0 = no pain, 10 = worst pain possible) when you are at rest and when you move or cough.

What if I start to feel sleepy?

Just relax. The pain medicine you'll be receiving has that effect on many people. Remember **to balance** the pain relief you request against any sleepiness you may experience. "**Just enough medicine**" will both **take away the pain and allow you to move and do your deep breathing and coughing exercises.**

What if I become uncomfortable?

If your pain medication seems to stop working, even after pushing the button several times, **just call the nurse to check your IV.** If you are still uncomfortable after the nurse has checked the IV, your nurse will know what to do.

How long will I be using the PCA pump?

That's a decision you and your health care providers will make. Just remember that everyone wants you to be as comfortable as possible and feeling yourself again -- quickly and safely.

Please turn over the page.