

Patient Controlled Analgesia (Adult)

Patient information Leaflet

February 2018

Introduction

Analgesia means 'painlessness' or 'no pain'. Unfortunately with the drugs and medicines that are currently available, it is usually not possible to **safely** relieve all your pain. We therefore aim to make you as comfortable as possible, so that you can sleep, move around, exercise and work with the physiotherapist.

There are various methods and drugs we can use to do this, as pain relief following surgery has improved quite significantly over the past few years. No longer are injections into your arm, leg or buttock, the only way of giving strong pain relieving medicines.

After your operation you may be offered a Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA) pump, to relieve your pain.

What Is Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA)?

This system relies on a special pump, which contains strong pain relief. A hand held button is connected to the PCA pump, which when pressed gives a small amount of pain relieving medicine straight into a vein usually in your arm or hand via a thin tube (cannula).

What Are The Benefits Of Patient Controlled Analgesia?

- ◆ You are in control of your pain relief
- ◆ Fewer side effects such as sickness and vomiting
- ◆ No delay in receiving pain relief
- ◆ It works within 5 minutes
- ◆ Increased safety

How Does A Patient Controlled Analgesia Pump Work?

You will be connected to the PCA pump via a 'drip'. This is a small plastic tube placed into a vein which is connected to a bag of fluid. The fluid is used to flush the pain relieving medicine into your blood stream. When you feel that your pain is getting stronger you must press the button until the machine beeps, this tells the pump to give you a small amount of the pain relieving medicine. You can do this whenever you feel discomfort, and you do not need to tell the nurse first.

Don't wait for your pain to build up, you may find it useful to press the button 5-10 minutes prior to movement (i.e. physiotherapy and getting out of bed) as it usually takes about five minutes to start working. After five minutes, if the pain is still the same, you can press the button again, and continue to press the button every 5 minutes until your pain has reduced. When your pain has settled you do not need to press the button again until the pain starts to return.

The PCA pump will be prescribed by your anaesthetist or Nurse Specialist in Acute Pain who is a Non-Medical Prescriber, and a qualified nurse will

programme and set it up. The dose of pain relieving medication to be given via the pump will be prescribed according to your individual needs.

Whilst on the PCA you may not breathe as deeply as normal, therefore oxygen is prescribed to ensure that enough oxygen enters your body. When the PCA is started, you will need to wear oxygen continuously for the first 24 hours, after this period you only need to wear it when sleeping.

Can I Give Myself Too Much?

NO There is a safety lockout period of time, which is normally five minutes, where you will not receive another dose no matter how many times you press the button within the prescribed time period.

How Often Should I Press The Button?

As often as you feel you need to. Everyone is individual therefore everyone's pain level is different, so you are the best person to decide how much pain medication you need. It is important not to consider the fear of addiction, as you may have had an operation or accident and you need the pain medication to help you get better.

N.B. You are the only person allowed to press the button. Do not allow any hospital staff, friends or relatives to do so.

How Will I Feel When I Am On Patient Controlled Analgesia?

You may feel sleepy and light headed when you first start using the PCA, however this may settle

Nursing Observations

Throughout the time which you use your PCA, nurses will regularly monitor your observations and assess how effective the PCA is in controlling your pain. This also enables them to identify any problems, which may occur. You may also be visited by the acute pain team.

What If The Patient Analgesia Does not Work?

If you are pressing the small button frequently, and are still uncomfortable, tell your nurse. She will firstly check that the pump is working properly and may be able to give you some other type of pain relief with the PCA.

If your pain continues, the Acute Pain Team will be contacted. As long as you are not drowsy, the nurse can assess and increase the amount of the drug you are receiving (according to the doctor's instructions) in order to make you more comfortable.

What Medication Can I Take Whilst Using Patient Controlled Analgesia?

It is important that you continue to take your usual medication, however if you take sleeping tablets or sedatives they may be stopped only during the time you are on the PCA. This is because the combination of the tablets and the PCA may make you too sleepy.

It is also necessary for you to have other pain relieving medicines such as Paracetamol, Codeine and anti-inflammatory drugs as well as using the PCA. By giving different types of medicines your pain will be better controlled, as they all work in different areas of your body, making you feel more comfortable. Once these medicines have been taken regularly for at least 24 hours, they should start to control your pain and you may find that you do not need to press the PCA button as often.

When Will The Patient Controlled Analgesia Be Stopped?

The acute pain team, doctor or ward nurse will discuss with you the right time to stop the PCA. It is usually stopped when the amount of drug you use each day reduces. This is a sign that the other pain relieving medicine you are being given, is helping to control your pain.

What Are The Side Effects Of The Drugs Used In Patient Controlled Analgesia?

Slow Breathing and drowsiness. The drugs used in the PCA may cause slow breathing and/or drowsiness, which can be easily treated with medication.

Itching - This can occur as a side effect of the morphine like drugs used and is easily treated with medication.

Feeling Sick and Vomiting - These can be treated with anti-sickness drugs.

Difficulty in passing urine - This is treated by passing a tube into your bladder.

Constipation - This can be treated with medication

Alternatives To Patient Controlled Analgesia

Oral Tablets and Medicines: These are used for all types of pain. They take at least 20-30 minutes to have some effect.

Injections: These are used to treat moderate to severe pain. They can be given directly into your vein for an immediate effect, or into your leg or buttock muscle. If given into a muscle it takes approximately 20 minutes to start working.

Suppositories: These are inserted into your back passage by yourself or the nurse, the drug then dissolves and enters your bloodstream. Suppositories work

over a longer period and may be given if you are vomiting or are nil by mouth. They will not make you open your bowels.

Epidural Analgesia: This is a method by which a small tube is placed close to the spinal cord. The tube is then connected to a machine, which gives drugs, to numb the nerves at and around the site of the operation.

Spinal Analgesia: A needle is placed close to the spinal cord, through which a single dose of pain relieving medication is administered, to numb the nerves at and around the site of the operation. This medication continues to work for a number of hours after the surgery. Once the medication has been given the needle is removed.

Nerve Block: Local anaesthetic is injected into tissues and nerves in and around the site of operation, to numb them. These drugs continue to work for a number of hours post-surgery.

Other Useful Contacts Or Information

NHS 111
Patient Information Centre

Source Of Good Practice

In compiling this information leaflet a number of articles and leaflets have been used including:

http://www.addenbrookes.org.uk/resources/pdf/patient_visitors/patient_information_leaflets/pain_service/PIN762_Info_PCA.pdf

<http://www.nlg.nhs.uk/IFP/single/IFP-0132.pdf>

If you have any questions you want to ask, you can use this space below to remind you

If you have a visual impairment this leaflet can be made available in bigger print or on audiotape. If you require either of these options please contact the Patient Information Centre on 0161 922 5332

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જો આપે આ માહિતી વાંચી કે સમજી શકો છો તે જણાવવા, અથવા કોઈપણ પ્રશ્ન
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