About Your Continuous Nerve Block Catheter

You have a nerve block catheter to help with pain control after the surgery. A health care provider will call you every day while the catheter is in place. Here are some important instructions to follow while your catheter is in place.

General instructions
• It is normal for fluid to leak from the catheter site. You can put a cloth over the site to absorb fluid.
• Do not get the catheter, pump or your bandages wet.
• Because you may feel some numbness in your arm or leg, be sure to protect your arm or leg from any injury, including mechanical and heat. This would include exposure to severe temperature changes, use of a heating pad, heating radiators, or injury from crutches/brace/immobilizer.
• It is normal for your fingers/toes to be completely numb up to 24 hours after surgery.
• You may have some weakness of the arm or leg where the local anesthetic is infusing. Because of this, do not try to bear weight or support yourself while the catheter is in place.
• Do not drive any vehicle or operate machinery with the catheter in place.
• The catheter may fall out. If this occurs, turn off the pump and take 1 to 2 pain pills as prescribed.
• After the intense block wears off, your fingers/toes may feel unusual. However, if you cannot feel someone else touching your fingers/toes (24 hours after surgery), turn off the pump and call the number below.
• If the pain pump is functioning, but you have pain, take 1 to 2 pain pills as prescribed by your surgeon.

If you notice any of the following, stop the infusion (turn off the pump) and call the number below:
• Redness, tenderness, swelling at the nerve block site
• Rash or hives
• Numbness around your mouth, metallic taste or ringing in your ears
• Lightheadedness, nervousness, confusion
• Twitching, convulsions, seizures

Removing your catheter is easy
• Take off the plastic dressing.
• Grasp the catheter close to the skin and pull.
• The numbness should resolve during the next 24 hours.

Once the catheter is out, if you notice continued drainage from the site, or numbness/weakness in your arm or leg, call the number below.

The medication in the pump should not be taken by mouth or given intravenously (into the veins). Doing so is dangerous and could be life threatening.

Contact Dr. _________________________
at _________________________________
with any questions about your nerve block catheter.