

After Surgery Pain Tips

Pain **cannot** always be eliminated. You will feel some pain after surgery. We will try to help you control it. While the pain may still exist, there are some ways to cope with it. Taking the pain medicine and using the alternative pain control ideas (listed below) will help get you through the most severe pain.

Pain Medicine: You will be prescribed an opioid pain medicine. Take as directed for the first 48 hrs. You should also take Motrin (Ibuprofen) 600-800mg three times a day with food.

Nerve Block: You will start feeling more pain about 12 hours after surgery, even with your nerve block. Your nerve block is still working. If you have pain, take your pain medicine if you have not done so yet.

Alternative Pain Control Options:

Doing different alternative pain control options will help your body and brain focus on something other than the pain. Ask your family and friends to help you with these methods.

Ice: **Start this right away.** A bag of frozen peas or corn work well to conform to the body and are reusable. Wrap the bag in a towel before placing on your body. **DO NOT** ice directly on the skin. Ice the surgery area for _____ minutes _____ times per day.

The cold will decrease inflammation. Heat or warm packs help to relax the muscles. **DO NOT USE** heat or warm packs directly on the surgical incision. The warm packs can be placed on either side of the incision.

Elevate: If you can, raise the extremity. This means support your arm or leg so that it is above the level of your heart. Make sure you are wiggling your fingers or toes and moving your wrist and ankles (if you can).

Music: helps reduce the strength of pain and helps with muscle relaxation. Listen, sing, play an instrument or write music.

Relax & Controlled Breathing: Slow deep breathing helps your body to relax.

Focus on tightening a muscle group and then relaxing it. Do this to parts of your body that were not involved in your surgery.

Position or Activity Change: Sit, stand, walk. Change your position or move often.

This increases blood circulation, which helps healing.

Massage: This does NOT have to be done by a professional. A gentle rub or massage to other areas of your body will help your muscles and soft tissue to relax. Do not massage the surgical site.

TV/Movies/Games/Computer: This will engage your brain and help to distract you from the pain. It is also fun.

Meditating: This helps your body relax and rest. It will stop the fight or flight response to pain.