



## Peripheral Nerve Block Patient Information

### What is a peripheral nerve block?

**A nerve block puts part of your body to sleep using numbing medication.** Anesthesia uses a small needle to inject a numbing medication around the nerves close to the area where you are having surgery. The nerves are located using an ultrasound machine

#### **Expectations after surgery:**

After surgery, you will have less pain in your surgical site as the nerve block continues to work.

#### **Most nerve blocks last 16-18 hours. Some may last for up to 24 hours.**

You will have decreased sensation around the area of the nerve block. Many times, you may not be able to move the extremity. This is completely normal. Until the nerve block has worn off, it is important that you are careful when using ice or heat.

Upper Extremity Nerve Blocks: You will be fitted with a sling after shoulder or arm surgery to protect the arm. Please wear the sling until the nerve block has completely worn off. Instructions for continued use of the sling will be provided with your discharge instructions.

Lower Extremity Nerve Blocks: You will be unable to walk on your t leg until the nerve block has fully worn off. Crutches or a walker will be provided to you. You will receive teaching on how to use the crutches or a walker before discharge.

#### **Pain Medications:**

Start taking your pain medication when you begin to feel pins and needles in the extremity. This means the nerve block is wearing off. Please take your pain medication as directed by your surgeon.

Do not wait until the nerve block has fully worn off to start your pain medication. Doing so will make it more difficult to control your pain.

Before bed on the day of surgery, even if you still have numbness, please take your pain medication. The nerve block could wear off while you are sleeping, and this could result in increased pain.

#### **Other Concerns:**

Be careful near heat sources as you may not feel the sensation of heat.

Do not put unnecessary pressure on the arm or leg that has the nerve block.