



Regional Nerve Block Information

A nerve block is a procedure performed by your anesthesia provider in order to help control pain following surgery. Medication is injected around a bundle of nerves in order to block the pain sensation. The nerve block may last 2-36 hours depending on the medication used for the procedure. A nerve block doesn't prevent pain; it only blocks the sensation of pain temporarily. Begin taking your pain medication as directed in order to keep the pain under control when the block wears off.

If you have had a nerve block, you may expect to feel:

- Numbness
- Tingling
- Heaviness
- Weakness or inability to move the extremity
- A feeling that your arm or leg has "fallen asleep"

While the affected extremity is numb, you may be at risk for injury because you are unable to feel pain, pressure or temperature changes. Here are some tips to help protect your arm or leg while it is numb:

- While you are awake change position of your arm or leg often. This helps to avoid putting too much pressure on the limb for long periods of time.
- While sleeping, pad the limb with pillows to avoid rolling onto it while you sleep. If you have had a shoulder or arm block, it is a good idea to sleep in a recliner with pillows under your arm to avoid rolling onto your numb arm as you sleep.
-If you have a cast or tight dressing, check the color of your fingers/toes every couple of hours. Call your surgeon if any look discolored.
- If you have had a shoulder, arm, or hand block, you will be sent home with a sling. The sling will help to keep your arm in a safe position. Wear the sling at all times until the nerve block completely wears off.
- If you have had a leg block, you may have difficulty bearing weight on that leg. You will be sent home with crutches and an immobilizer to use until the nerve block wears off. Use your crutches and brace and have someone assist you with walking until the nerve block completely wears off. **Do not bear weight on the leg until the block has COMPLETELY worn off.** Failing to do so may result in a fall.