

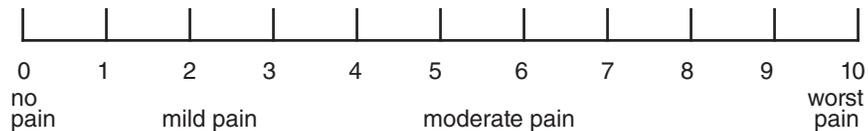
## Will pain control medication make me sleepy?

Yes, you may feel sleepy at first. You will soon find the amount of medication that gives you pain relief but you stay awake and alert. You should check with your nurse before you get up for the first time.

If you have nausea, talk to your nurse. You can get medication to help.

## How do I measure my pain?

You can use this scale to describe the amount of pain you are having. The nurses and other members of the health care team use this scale to help understand your pain.



## How long will I use the PCA machine?

Most people begin to take oral pain control medication after 1 or 2 days.

## Remember

- ✘ Do not push the button for pain medication if you feel sleepy.
- If you do not feel pain relief after you have pushed the button, call a nurse.
- If you have nausea, talk to your nurse.
- Check with your nurse before you get up for the first time after your surgery.

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## Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA) by Intravenous Administration



St. Joseph's  
Healthcare  Hamilton

[www.stjoes.ca](http://www.stjoes.ca)

## What is PCA?

**PCA** stands for **Patient Controlled Analgesia**.

**PCA** is a machine that allows you to give your own pain medication. **Only the patient should push the control button.**

## How does Intravenous PCA work?

A nurse puts the pain control medication ordered for you into the machine. The machine is attached to intravenous tubing called the IV.

When you want pain control medication, you push the control button. You will hear a beep. This tells you that the machine knows you pushed the button for pain medication. The pump then sends 1 dose of medication from the machine through your IV into your body. It takes less than 1 minute to begin feeling the effects of the pain medication.

Some people also have a regular flow of medication coming through the pump. The machine is programmed to give you an even flow of medication. You can still push the button for an extra dose when needed.

## Why is PCA good to use?

With PCA there is no waiting time between asking for pain control medication and getting it. You also do not have the discomfort from having injections into your skin for pain control.

## Do I need to stay in bed when using PCA?

You can move around with the machine if you are allowed out of bed. The machine is attached to a pole with wheels. The pump can be switched to batteries so you can move around.

## When do I start to use PCA?

The PCA machine is connected when you are awake after anaesthesia. You can begin to give yourself pain medication as soon as you are able to push the button.

## When should I give myself pain medication?

You should give yourself pain medication when you begin to feel pain. You can also have some before you:

- do deep breathing, coughing and moving exercises
- begin physiotherapy
- have a test or procedure that may cause pain

## Can I give myself too much medication?

The machine has many safety features built into it.

You cannot give yourself too much medication.

The machine is programmed to give you a certain amount of medication during the day and night.

The machine will not give you any medication if you have pushed the button before the programmed times.