Pueblo Surgery Center

PAIN CONTROL - A PATIENT GUIDE

WHAT IS PAIN?

Pain is an uncomfortable feeling that tells you something may be wrong in your body. Pain is your body’s way of sending a warning to your brain cells.

You have thousands of nerve cells, most can sense pain. When there is an injury to your body, in this case surgery, these tiny cells send messages along nerves into your spinal cord and then up to your brain. Pain medicine blocks these messages or reduces their effect on your brain.

Before surgery

* Ask the doctor or nurse what to expect
* Will there be much pain after surgery?
* Where will it occur?
* How long is it likely to last?

Being prepared helps put you in control

* Discuss pain control options with the doctor and nurse
* Talk with the doctor and nurse about pain control methods that have worked well or not so well for you before
* Talk about any concerns you have about pain medicine
* Give an accurate health history including allergies and current medications or recreational drugs that you take.

After surgery

* Pain medicine can be given to you through your IV, as a shot or orally as a pill or liquid
* Non-drug treatments for pain control include cold packs, relaxation, music, massage, and thinking of positive images

Your nurse will ask you about your pain because we want you to be as comfortable as possible. You will be asked to rate your pain on a scale of 0-10. This helps the nurse measure your level of pain. Be sure to tell your nurse if you have pain and use a number on the pain scale if possible. Pain medicine can be given through your IV, as a shot, or as a pill.

Please do not wait until your pain is above a “5” or “6” level to ask for medication. The medications work better if the pain is treated early. The same method applies at home, do not wait until you are extremely uncomfortable to take pain medications, you will actually need less medication if you keep the pain under control. If the medications and non-drug treatments are not working for you or if the medications upset your stomach or make you itch please let your surgeon know. Take your pain medications with food if possible.

PAIN INTENSITY SCALE

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If your pain does not improve or comes back please tell your nurse. You will not be a “bother”. The nurse wants and needs to know about it to keep you comfortable. Your pain may not be completely gone, but it should be kept at a level for your well being.

Please ask the nurse if you have any questions.

Patient/Guardian Signature       Date