

PCA

WHAT IS PCA?

"PCA" is short for "patient-controlled analgesia". It means that you can decide when you need pain medicine to help you feel better after your operation.

HOW WILL I GET MY PAIN MEDICINE?

While you are asleep for your operation, the doctor will slip a tiny plastic tube under the skin of your arm or hand. This tube is called an "I.V.". It is used to give your body a drink or medicine after your operation. Instead of getting your pain medicine through your mouth or through a needle, you will get it through the I.V. tube. The I.V. is connected to the PCA pump.

HOW DOES THE PCA WORK?

Your nurse will give you a big black-and-white button to hold. When you start to hurt or feel sore, just press the button. Pressing the button sends pain medicine to you through your I.V. The PCA has a little computer that keeps track of how much pain medicine the doctor wants you to have. The computer makes sure that you don't get too much medicine.

Don't worry about how often you press the button. It's your job to press the button whenever you start to hurt. No one else can press it.

WHAT IF I STILL HURT AFTER PRESSING THE BUTTON?

Usually pressing the button will help the pain go away. Sometimes it might take a minute or two for the medicine to work. Your nurse will ask you how well the medicine is working. If you still hurt a few minutes after pressing the PCA button, tell your nurse.

HOW LONG WILL I HAVE THE PCA?

You will have the PCA for the first few days after your operation. When you start to feel better and don't need your I.V. any more, your nurse will talk to you about taking away the I.V. and the PCA. You may still have some hurt or soreness. Your nurse will give you some medicine through your mouth to make you feel better.

Corometric Monitor

WHAT IS A COROMETRIC MONITOR?

A corometric monitor is a machine that is connected to your child that shows how fast his or her heart is beating and how fast he or she is breathing.

Long thin wires are attached to the monitor. These wires have small clips on the end which are attached to stickers that are put on your child's chest and stomach. This will not hurt your child. He or she will be able to eat, sleep and play.

The monitor is very small and usually sits on a table or shelf close to your child. The monitor is maintained regularly.

HOW DOES THE COROMETRIC MONITOR WORK?

A nurse sets a range on the monitor based on the age and weight of your child. If your child's breathing or heart rate goes outside the range set, a very loud alarm will go off. This alarm can be heard from outside your child's room.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE ALARM GOES OFF?

If the alarm goes off a nurse will come into the room and check your child.

WHO DECIDES IF YOUR CHILD WILL BE CONNECTED TO A MONITOR?

Your child's doctor and nurses will decide whether or not to put your child on a monitor.

HOW LONG WILL YOUR CHILD NEED TO BE CONNECTED TO THE MONITOR?

Some children will need to be connected to the monitor all the time. Other children may only need to be connected when they are sleeping. Your child's doctor and nurses will decide how long your child needs to be connected to the monitor.

It is important that you do not turn off the monitor.