

Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA)

What is PCA... Patient Controlled Analgesia.

PCA stands for patient controlled analgesia. This means that “you” the patient is in control of giving your pain medication. The **PCA pump** is attached to your IV pole and delivers pain medication to you through tubing that is connected to your IV.

The **PCA pump** is programmed with a specific medication, dosages and how often based on your needs. These are ordered by the doctor. There are limits on how often and the amount of medication that you can receive. This makes the **PCA pump** a very safe and effective way to control your pain.

How do you use it correctly?

It is very important to remember that only YOU are allowed to push the button on the PCA pump. Family members and/or friends should NEVER press the control button for you.

(This includes Pediatric patients)

You will have a hand held remote that controls the **PCA pump**. On the remote is a **BLUE button** and when it is pushed it will automatically deliver the dose of medication the doctor has ordered through your IV.

There is also a small **GREEN light** near the top of the remote that will flash when the correct amount of time has passed and another dose can be safely taken.

If you have discomfort and feel you need relief push the **BLUE button**. The machine is set to be safe for you to use. **You will not get any pain medication unless you push the BLUE button.**

The **PCA pump** stores information. This allows the nurse to view how often and how much medication you have received. The nurse will ask you frequently about your pain. You will be asked to rate your pain level on a scale of 0-10. Use of this scale will help your medical team to treat your pain effectively.

| | | |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 0 | 5 | 10 |
| No Pain | Moderate Pain | Severe Pain |

Patients using a **PCA pump** require less pain medication and will be changed over to medication by mouth when appropriate. Some common side effects of IV or by mouth pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, itching and/or constipation. Your nurse can answer questions regarding the use of your **PCA pump** or pain management.