

Family Education Sheet

Going Home With A Nerve Catheter: BHAPPY Program



Boston Children's Hospital
Until every child is well™

View more health education materials at
www.bostonchildrens.org/familyeducation

Important reminder

If you are scheduled for a telehealth/virtual visit appointment, you will get a text or email with the date and time of your visit. You will also get instructions on how to set up your computer or mobile device for your visit.

What is a nerve catheter?

A nerve catheter – also called a nerve block catheter – helps to control pain. The doctor injects a numbing medication (a local anesthetic) near a nerve to block pain in a specific part of your child's body. Some children get a partial nerve block. This means that only some of the surgical site will be numb.

- Watch a video about nerve catheters, courtesy of Seattle Children's Hospital:
<https://bit.ly/seattlecath>. Or scan the QR code with your phone camera.



How will my child feel after getting a nerve catheter?

Your child will wake up with the affected area of their body, like an arm or leg, feeling numb.

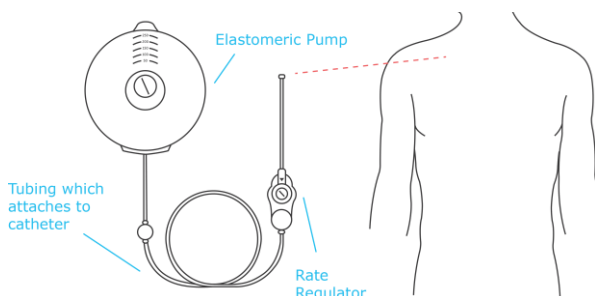
Some children say that they can't feel or move part or all of the area of their body at all. This is normal.

How does a nerve catheter work?

Going home with a nerve catheter allows numbing pain medicine (local anesthetics) to flow directly to the area where your child has pain for about 72 hours (3 days).

A catheter (a small plastic tube) stays at the site of the nerves that will be blocked. The medications are given through the catheter by a small elastomeric pump. This pump looks like a ball. The pump gets smaller over time as it delivers the medicine at a set rate, but you may not be able to notice this.

Nerve block by continuous infusion



What are the benefits of a nerve catheter?

Having a nerve catheter decreases the amount of pain experienced, and in some cases gets rid of pain while the catheter is in. Because the area feels numb, your child won't need as much other pain medication after the surgery.

What are the risks of a nerve catheter?

- Signs of medication problems:
 - Dizziness
 - Metallic taste in the mouth
 - Numbness around the lips
 - Ringing in the ears
 - Seizures
 - Sudden anxiety (worry) or palpitations (heart racing or beating very fast)
- Signs of infection at the site of catheter insertion:
 - Pus
 - Redness
 - Swelling
 - Tenderness
- Other changes like:
 - Catheter comes out
 - Pain levels go up suddenly
 - Redness, swelling or pus (leaky fluid) around the catheter site

If any of these things happen, clamp the tubing and call Boston Children's page operator at (617) 355-6000. Ask to page 1128.

What happens after we go home?

The catheter will continue to infuse the medication on its own until you clamp the tubing. You will get text messages on days 1, 2, 3, 7 and 14 after the catheter is placed asking you to answer some questions. **These questions are important and help us know how your child is recovering.**

How do I care for my child at home?

Medication Rate

- The nurse who sends you home will lock the rate regulator with a zip-tie.
 - Do not open this or adjust the rate unless instructed to by a member of the pain service during a telehealth visit

Clamp and tubing care

- Check that the clamps on the catheter are all open.
- Make sure that all connections are tight and that the tubing isn't kinked (bent) or knotted.
 - If the tubing gets disconnected, wrap it in clean alcohol swab, clamp it and call us.

Dressing care

- If your child had surgery, keep the dressing (bandages) around the surgery site dry and clean.
- Do not have your child shower while the catheter is still in.** You may give your child a sponge bath, but keep dressing area dry.
- There may be leakage at the catheter insertion site where the clear dressing is. If it happens, add more dressing (Tegaderm) and tape to the site.

Pump care

- Keep the labels on the pump and tubes.
- Keep the pump in its case and away from cold or hot packs.

Caring for the numb areas of the body

- Protect the numb part of your child's body from injury since your child won't feel it as much as normal.
- Use heat and cold treatments as prescribed. Wrap any heat packs in a cloth such as a pillowcase so that it's not directly on the skin.

Care after leg surgery with a catheter

Your child should not put any weight on their leg until the catheter comes out and the nerve block has worn off.

Care after arm surgery with a catheter

- Keep your child's arm in a sling while the catheter is in place.

When does the catheter come out?

You will take out the catheter during your telehealth visit.

Telehealth visit for removal:

Date/time: _____

Connect to your telehealth appointment at least 10 minutes before the above time.

How do I prepare for the telehealth visit?

To prepare for your telehealth visit, follow the directions below:

- Clamp tubing at 9am** on the day of your telehealth visit. **This is important.**
- Check your email for the information about the visit. If this information is not in your inbox, check your junk/spam folder. Call us if you have questions about the appointment (617) 355-7040.
- Watch this video and review the steps below** courtesy of Seattle Children's Hospital:
<http://bit.ly/seattlecathremoval>. Or scan the QR code with your phone camera.
- Connect to your appointment at least 10 minutes before the above time.
- Wash your hands and lay out the supplies that were given to you when you left the hospital.
- Start to remove** the adhesive dressing 10 minutes before your appointment. Open the adhesive remover and slowly peel back the dressing (bandages) while wiping the adhesive remover between the dressing and the skin.
- When the provider joins the telehealth visit, put on the disposable gloves in the supply bag. Slowly pull the catheter until it is out. If it seems stuck or your child has sharp pain, **stop pulling right away** and tell the provider.
- Once the catheter is out, use gauze to dry out any drainage or blood. Then put on a Band-Aid.

Throw away the catheter, used dressing and the pump in a safe location to make sure that children or pets don't ingest any leftover medication.

Contact us

To reach us any time (day or night), including holidays and weekends, please:

- Call Boston Children's Page Operator at 617-355-6000 and ask them to page 1128. This is very important so that a clinician on call for the BHAPPY Program will call you back.**