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Anaesthesia service

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Deze brochure werd enkel ontwikkeld voor gebruik binnen het UZ Gent.
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PAIN PUMP



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PAIN PUMP

You will soon undergo a medical intervention at Ghent University Hospital. It is important that you feel as comfortable as possible after the operation. That is why we will give you a pain pump or PCA pump. PCA stands for Patient Controlled Analgesia or pain relief that you can control yourself.

This leaflet provides information about the use of the pain pump.

What is a pain pump?

The pain pump allows you to give yourself pain relief medication when you need it. You can press the control button yourself.

Advantages

You can regulate the painkillers faster and better because you can administer the pain medication when you need it. You don't have to call a nurse or wait for any other form of pain medication.

The anaesthetist will configure the pump in advance to make sure that you will never get too much of the pain medication.

Placement of the pain pump

After your operation, we will observe you at the Post-Anaesthesia Care Department (PAZA) or the Intensive Care Department. The pain pump will be taken into use immediately via an infusion in a vein in your arm or neck or via an epidural catheter in your back. The pain pump contains the pain relief medication that the anaesthetist or pain nurse prepares.

We attach the pain pump to your bed and put the control button within easy reach.

Using the pain pump

If you feel too much pain, press the pain pump button. You will only feel the optimal effect of the pain medication after about 20 minutes. Make sure not to let the pain get too intense. If you have pressed the button several times and still feel pain, talk to the nurse.

Is a pain pump safe?

The anaesthetist determines which dose will be administered each time. We customise these settings for each patient. You don't have to be afraid of an overdose. If the demand is too high, the pump will not give any medication. The pump is secured with a code and a key. This means no one can simply make changes to the device.

Pain evaluation

Every day after the operation, the pain team will visit you to evaluate and adjust the pain relief treatment if necessary. A scale from zero to ten is used for this purpose. Zero means no pain. Ten is the worst pain imaginable. We will assess the pain when you are at rest and during movement/care.

How long can I use a pain pump?

You can use the pain pump for up to three to five days after the operation. Of course you can consult with the pain team. When the pain is sufficiently reduced, we will remove the pain pump and the catheter. We may then switch to other pain medication via an infusion or via the mouth.

Can I walk around with a pain pump?

A pain pump restricts your freedom of movement. Keep that in mind. Make sure to always take care of the catheter. Do not pull the infusion tube and always move calmly and cautiously.

In the case of an epidural pain pump, you should always ask for the help of a nurse if you want to get out of bed.

Possible side effects

Despite the safety and effectiveness of the system, a number of side effects may occur: nausea, vomiting, difficulty urinating, constipation, itching, drowsiness and sleepiness. These side effects are temporary and will disappear quickly. However, it is best to report them to the doctor or nurse.

Your experience with a pain pump

Your experience with a pain pump can be useful to improve our service. Discuss all your questions, comments and problems with the anaesthetist or pain nurse who comes to see you.