

Chest Wall Nerve Block for Breast Surgery

Your surgeon and anesthesiologist recommend a nerve block as a part of the pain management plan for your surgery. A nerve block is an injection of numbing medication (local anesthetic) that lessens feeling and pain at the site of surgery. This brochure explains the procedure and care needed after you leave the hospital. Carefully follow any instructions given to you by your care team.

Procedure

You will get the nerve block in the pre-operative area before your surgery. Your anesthesiologist will use an ultrasound-guided technique to safely inject the numbing medication around the nerves in your chest. This may cause you to lose some feeling in the area where you will have the surgery. This may last up to 24 hours.

Going home

Protect the surgical area

The nerve block can last up to 24 hours. During this time:

- **It is important to protect your chest wall and breast from injury.**
- Keep your surgical bandages on for the first 24 hours. If the care team gave you a surgical bra and/or an elastic bandage (ACE™) wrap, please follow your surgeon's instructions.
- Protect your chest from hot and cold temperatures. You may lose your sense of hot and cold until the block wears off.

Stay comfortable

The block will start to wear off several hours after the surgery. You may feel the pain get worse as the block starts to wear off. To help manage the pain, take your pain medication on the schedule prescribed by your surgeon, as needed for pain.

Do not wait to feel severe pain. It is much better to prevent the build-up of pain than to try to stop it once it is there.

Contact your surgeon about any severe pain not managed by your medication.

Special instructions

- Have someone stay with you at home after your surgery.
- Carefully follow any instructions given to you by your care team.
- If you notice numbness or weakness in your arms, please contact the anesthesiologist.

You can page the anesthesiologist 24 hours a day at 312.695.7039 if you have any questions about your anesthesia care.