Care of Your Leg or Foot after a Nerve Block

To help control your pain after surgery, you had a nerve block. Your anesthesiologist injected numbing medicine around the nerves that send the pain signals from your leg or foot to your brain. This helps you feel little or no pain.

Because your leg or foot is numb, you need to take special care to protect it until the nerve block wears off.

How long will my leg or foot be numb?

- How long the nerve block lasts may vary from person to person. Often it will last between 12 to 20 hours but may last up to 2 days. Your leg and or foot may be weak or hard to control during this time. It may give out under your weight so be careful.

- As the numbing wears off, you may feel tingling as the nerves start to wake up.

How to best control your pain

It is important to stay ahead of your pain!

- You should take the oral pain medicine your doctor prescribed when you start to feel tingling near your surgical site or when the numbness begin to wear off.

- If you have not started to take the oral pain medicine, you should take it before going to bed. Take your pain medicine even if you are not having any pain so you have some medicine in your body in case the numbing wears off while you are sleeping.
Be safe while your leg is numb

- You are at risk for falling after the nerve block. Your leg and foot will be weak and may not support your weight. Do not put your weight on your leg while it is still numb.
- Check your leg and foot often, especially if you change positions. Be sure your leg or foot is not pinched and there is not too much pressure on it.
- Be careful around things that are hot or cold as your feeling is decreased while your leg is numb. You may not feel the heat or cold on your skin.

Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.