Royal Cornwall Hospitals
NHS Trust

Patient controlled analgesia (PCA)



You are in control of your pain relief!

This leaflet will help you understand how your PCA works and how to use it.

What is PCA?

PCA stands for Patient controlled analgesia.

It is a special machine that gives you pain medicine through a small tube in your hand or arm.

You press a button when you need pain relief.



You are in control and get medicine only when you need it.

How does it work?

1. You feel pain.
2. Press the button once.
3. The machine give you a dose of pain relief medicine.
4. You should start to feel better.

Only you can press the button!

The machine has a safety lock. It will not give too much medicine.

When should I press the button?

Press the button when you start to feel pain. It works best if you don't wait until the pain gets too bad.



You can press the button as often as the machine allows.

There is a short time between doses (this is called the **lockout time)**. You may see it on the screen.

Will it make me sleepy?

PCA medicine can sometimes make you feel sleepy, dizzy or sick (nauseous). This usually gets better.

Tell your nurse if you:

- feel too sleepy
- feel sick
- feel dizzy
- have any worries



Good to know

PCA is for YOU. No one else should press your button.

Let a grown-up know if your pain is not getting better.

Your nurse is here to help you. Just ask!

PCA helps you rest, heal and feel more comfortable.

Any questions?

If you are not sure about anything, please ask your nurse. We are here to help!

Good pain relief helps you get better faster!



Remember: You are brave, and you are in control!
We are all here to help you feel better.

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