Safety information

It is very important that you protect the part of your child's body that is numb until the sensation has fully returned. This means not exposing it to heat (such as hot water bottles, radiators or hot baths) as they are unable to feel if the temperature is too hot. It is also important to avoid any trauma/injury to the numb part of your child's body.

If the block is performed on a limb, it is important to remember that your child's limb will not be as strong as usual.

Questions

If you have any questions regarding the risks of peripheral regional anaesthesia, please do ask. You will also have the opportunity to speak with your child's anaesthetist and ask questions on the day of surgery/procedure. If you would like the opportunity to discuss further prior to admission, please get in touch:

Hospital Switchboard: 0131 536 1000

Paediatric surgical ward (Dunvegan): 0131 312 1332

Further details and references

[1] RCoA webpage discussing nerve damage following peripheral nerve block in adults: www.rcoa.ac.uk/patients/patient-information-resources/patient-information-leaflets-video-resources/peripheral-nerve-blocks

[2] PRAN (Paediatric Regional Anaesthesia Network) complication dataset 2018: https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30074928/

Baby-blocks.com

Scan the QR codes for links to further information about general and regional anaesthetics.

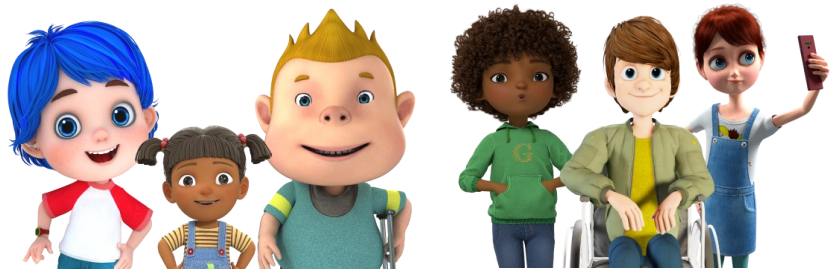
Apagbi.org.uk

NHS Lothian

Supported by Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity

Peripheral Regional Anaesthesia for Children and Young People

An information leaflet for parents and carers



The Royal Hospital for Children and Young People, Edinburgh

v1.0 approved by NHS Lothian Patient Information Feb 25, Review: Feb 28

What is it?

As part of your child's general anaesthetic, you may be offered peripheral regional anaesthesia, otherwise known as a peripheral nerve block.

A peripheral nerve block is the placement of local anaesthetic around a nerve or group of nerves, to numb the area of your child's body where they are having surgery.

It aims to provide a safe and effective form of pain relief both during and after your child's surgery.

How is a nerve block performed?

A peripheral nerve block is performed by an anaesthetist when your child is asleep during their general anaesthetic. Exactly which nerves will be blocked depends on your child's operation and your anaesthetist will go through this with you. The block should last for between 6 and 24 hours after the operation.

For complex surgery, a nerve block catheter (plastic tube) may be left in place to allow local anaesthetic to run after surgery. This allows the pain relief to last for a couple of days after the operation.

Benefits

- Provides pain relief during the operation and afterwards.
- Fewer strong pain killing medications needed, both during the operation and afterwards.
- Reduction in the side effects associated with these strong medications, such as feeling sick and vomiting, drowsiness, sleepiness, difficulty going for a wee and itching.
- Faster recovery time after the operation.
- Ability to eat and drink sooner after the operation.

What to expect after your child wakes up

Your child will experience a numb sensation after they wake up – it may take up to 24 hours after the operation for the numb sensation to fully return to normal. Your child may be discharged with the block still working. If the numb sensation lasts longer than 48 hours and you are no longer in the hospital, you should contact the anaesthetic department.

As the block begins to wear off your child may experience a tingling sensation or pins and needles. This is normal.

Risks

Complications are rare after peripheral regional anaesthesia. There are several large studies from the UK and around the world that demonstrate the safety of nerve blocks. Here are the risks explained: