

Your ambIT Electronic Pump

For continuous nerve block



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This handout explains how your ambIT electronic infusion pump helps manage pain after surgery using a continuous nerve block. It includes tips for using your pump safely at home, warning signs to watch for, and instructions for removing and returning your pump.

Pain Relief After Surgery

Pain relief is an important part of your recovery after surgery. When you feel comfortable, it will be easier and faster for you to heal and return to your normal activities.

The most common way to treat pain after surgery is with *opioids*, which are pain medications like morphine or codeine. Opioids can be helpful for pain, but there are some risks involved in taking them, including:

- They can have side-effects, such as difficulty breathing, constipation, nausea, vomiting, and feeling sleepy.
- Opioids affect your entire body, and they can slow down your recovery.
- They can be habit-forming or addicting, meaning it can be hard to stop taking them.

Local anesthetics are medications that help pain only in a specific part of your body. They do not affect your entire body like opioids do, so there is less risk of side effects. The ambIT Pain Control System is a device that can help you get local anesthetic during your recovery.

How the ambIT Pain Control System Works

During your procedure, your surgeon will place a *catheter* (small tube) under your skin near your incision. Pain medicine flows from the ambIT pump through the catheter. Your doctor may set up the pump to deliver your medication continuously or at specific times. You may be able to press a button to get a little extra medicine for your pain, if your doctor prescribes this option.

You can take the pump home with you from the hospital. It is small and easy to carry in a case. When your treatment is done, your doctor will tell you when it is okay to remove the catheter at home. You will get a return box and prepaid label so you can send the pump back for free.

How can the ambIT pump help me?

- It can make you more comfortable while you recover after surgery.
- It provides pain relief without the side effects of opioids.
- You may go back to your normal activities faster.
- You may go home from the hospital earlier.

Instructions for Your Pump

- The **RUN/PAUSE button** is just below the pump display screen. Press it to start, pause, or resume the infusion, and to silence alarms.
- You will know your pump is delivering medicine when you see a blinking green light inside the **BOLUS button**. The BOLUS button is below the RUN/PAUSE button.
- You will also see “ml” on the screen, which shows how much medicine has been given.
- If the pump is paused, you’ll see a **pause symbol** on the screen. The pump will beep 2 times every 4 minutes to remind you.
- You can press the **BOLUS button** to get a little extra medicine when needed, if your doctor prescribes this option. The green light will blink 2 times when this happens.
- When your medicine is finished, the pump will make 1 long beep and then 3 short beeps. This will repeat every 4 minutes. When you hear this, you can turn off the pump and follow your doctor’s instructions.



RUN/PAUSE button



BOLUS button



Pause symbol

If you hear an alarm sound (constant beeping) from your pump, push the RUN/PAUSE button to silence the alarm. The medicine may not be able to flow. Check to make sure:

- White tubing clamp is open (moves freely and does not stop the medicine flow)
- Tubing is not kinked (bent)
- The filter is not taped or covered

When the medicine can flow freely, push the RUN/PAUSE button again to restart.

Safety Instructions

- Do **not** reuse the catheter or pump after your treatment is done.
- Protect the pump and catheter area from water. Ask your care team if you have questions about this.

Symptoms to Watch for

The symptoms below could be a sign of a serious problem. If you have any of these, **close the clamp on the pump tube immediately, and call your care team or 911.**

- Fever, chills, or sweating
- Bowel or bladder changes (difficulty peeing or pooping, or other unusual changes)
- Difficulty breathing
- Redness, warmth, discharge (fluid) or lots of bleeding from the catheter site
- Pain, swelling, or a large bruise around the catheter
- Feeling dizzy, lightheaded, or confused
- Blurry vision
- Hearing a ringing or buzzing sound
- Metal taste in your mouth
- Numbness or tingling around your mouth, fingers, or toes
- Feeling drowsy or unusually tired

Numbness

You might feel numb around the catheter and surgery area. If you feel numb, be extra careful to avoid getting hurt. For example:

- Do **not** keep ice or heat on that area. You may not feel it burn you or damage your skin.
- Move carefully to avoid bumping or scratching the area.
- Check your site regularly for redness, swelling, or cuts.

How to Remove Your Catheter

The catheter is a small tube near your incision site that is connected to your infusion pump. The color of the catheter may be clear or yellow. If your doctor tells you to remove the catheter, follow the steps below and any extra instructions your doctor gives you.

To see video instructions, scan the QR code on the right or visit anesthesiology.uw.edu/education/patient-education/at-home-continuous-nerve-infusions



Scan to see
video
instructions

- Wash your hands carefully with soap and warm water. Dry your hands well.
- Remove the dressing (bandage) covering the catheter site.
- Remove any adhesive (sticky) strips.
- Hold the catheter close to your skin and gently pull on the catheter. It should be easy to remove and not painful.
 - Do **NOT** pull hard, pull quickly, or tug on the catheter.
 - Do **NOT** cut the catheter.
 - If the catheter is hard to remove or if it stretches, **STOP** and call your care team. Pulling hard can break the catheter.
 - **Important:** After you remove the catheter, look at the tip. You should see a small black mark. This means the whole catheter came out. If you do not see a black mark, stop and call your care team.
- Place a dressing (bandage) over the catheter site as your care team instructs you to.
- If you have more than 1 catheter site, repeat the steps above for each one.

How To Return Your AmbIT Pump

Note: The *cassette* is the plastic part that connects the medicine bag to the pump. It holds the tubing and snaps onto the top of the pump. The *shipping cap* is a small plastic cover that fits on top of the pump where the cassette normally goes.

Shipping Your Pump

1. Turn off the pump by turning the bottom counterclockwise.
2. **If you have a shipping cap:** Remove the cassette. Then put on the shipping cap by lining up the tabs and snapping them into place. Throw away the cassette.
3. **If you did not get a shipping cap:** Leave the cassette on and cut the tubing with scissors.
4. Throw away the medibag (medication bag) and black carrying case.

5. Place the pump in the bubble-wrap sleeve and seal it closed.
6. Put the pump inside the shipping box with your completed questionnaire paper. Seal the box shut.
7. Note the tracking number on the front of the shipping box for your reference.
8. Ship the box using the service listed on the shipping label.

If you have questions about returning your pump, call 832-791-6048 or visit ambitpump.com.

Common Questions

- **Will the ambIT pump treat all my pain?**

Patients have different levels of pain. The ambIT pump works with other pain relief medications or treatments your doctor may prescribe after surgery. The ambIT pump may help you have better pain relief and you may not need as much pain medication.

- **Can I shower while I have the infusion pump?**

Do not shower with your pump. When you take a shower put the pump in a safe place near you. Putting it in a plastic bag can help it avoid getting wet. Put a waterproof covering over your catheter site, such as clean plastic wrap and tape. Talk with your care team for more instructions.

- **Can I move while I have the infusion pump?**

One of the benefits of having a small pump such as ambIT is that patients can still move instead of being confined to a bed. However, your care provider may give you some guidelines for activities to avoid.

- **My pump seems to be working (making noise) and then stops and is quiet. Is this normal?**

Yes. You may not hear the pump all the time, but it will give you the right dose of medication your doctor has prescribed.

- **What does the flashing green light in the bolus button mean?**

The green light and the medication amount on the screen show that the pump is working correctly.

For More Information

- You should get a Patient Manual before you leave the hospital. You can also find the manual online at www.ambitpump.com.
- If you have questions about how your pump works, you can call the 24-hour Product Support Hotline at 800.444.2728.
- If you have any medical questions, call your care team. Call 911 for any emergency.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions about your catheter or pump.

- Harborview Regional Anesthesia Service:** Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call 206.999.0992.
- After hours, on weekends and holidays,** please call the 24-hour product support hotline to speak to a registered nurse: 1.800.444.2728
- A Nerve Block Questionnaire will be sent out each day through MyChart until your nerve catheter treatment is done. You can find this in your MyChart account "To Do List" list. Fill out the questionnaire each day.
- You can ask for our Anesthesia Team to call you.