

# GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

## POST-OP PAIN MANAGEMENT

Welcome to the Surgery Center at Georgetown University Hospital (GUH). The nurses of GUH are dedicated to doing everything possible to control your pain after surgery.

### Controlling Your Pain is Your Right

Nothing is more important to the nurses and doctors of GUH's Surgery Center than your safety and comfort. We strive to make your surgical experience the best possible.

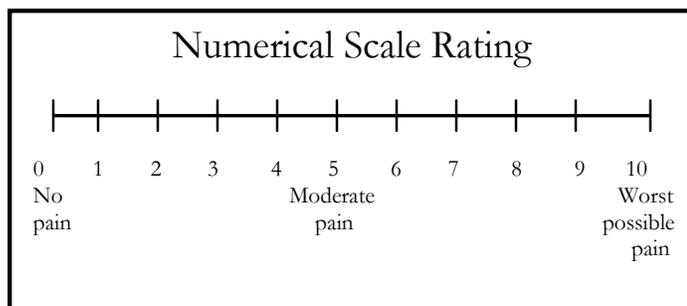
### You Do Not Have to Endure Severe Pain After Surgery

We provide this information to help you understand your options for pain treatment, and to help you know how to best describe your pain to us. Limiting your pain not only improves your comfort, but it speeds recovery and reduces the possibilities for complications. It is important to us that you be aware of your pain levels so we can take an active role in its management.

### What Kinds of Pain Will I Feel After Surgery?

If you are experiencing pain after your surgery, tell your nurse. Sometimes, the place of the incision isn't the only place you may feel pain. It isn't uncommon for your throat to hurt or your muscles or joints to ache. If you are taking medications for chronic pain prior to your surgery, discuss this with your doctor so we can assure the best methods of pain control for both chronic and post-op pain.

### What Can I Do to Help Keep My Pain Under Control?



You can help us understand your pain level by utilizing this simple scale that measures pain on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 being "no pain" and 10 being the "worst pain you can imagine."

### What Treatments Will Help Manage My Pain?

There are a number of ways of controlling your pain through both medication and non-medication methods.

### Pain relief treatments after surgery include:

- IV Pain Medication
- Nerve Blocks (provides targeted pain relief)
- Local Anesthetics
- Oral Medications
- Transdermal (skin patches containing pain medication)
- PCA (Patient Controlled Analgesia) Pump: enables you to control your pain by pushing a button release pain medication through an IV tube
- Spinal and Epidural Catheters

### Non-medicated methods include:

- Cold packs
- Positioning
- Relaxation and Distraction techniques

### Pain Control is Our Promise

Thank you for choosing Georgetown University Hospital for your surgical care.

We may not always be able to eliminate your pain, but we'll do everything possible to control it.

*You have a right to the best level of pain relief that can be safely provided.*

### IN SUMMARY: What to Expect After Surgery

1. Expect some post-operative pain and don't expect it to be limited to the areas immediately surrounding your incision.
2. Expect to be asked to describe your pain. Use the simple 0-to-10 pain chart.
3. Expect your doctors and nurses to work with you to determine the best course of treatment to control your pain.
4. Expect your Georgetown University Hospital nurse to make every effort to control your pain before you are ready to go home.



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