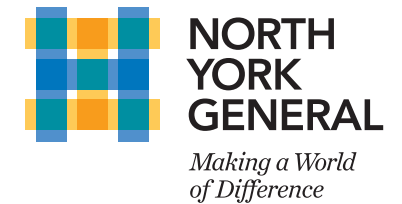
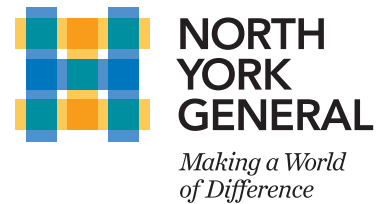


Who are Anesthesiologists?

Ontario Anesthesiologists are medical doctors who have taken extra training to specialize in Anesthesia. It is important that we know about your past medical history, current medications, allergies, and ability to manage physical activity. Anesthesiologist may ask to review your medical chart, assess any laboratory results (eg. bloodwork), and examine you before and after surgery. Based on this information, the Anesthesiologist develops an anesthesia plan with you and answers any questions.

Anesthesiologists stay with patients in the operating room until the end of surgery. After surgery, Anesthesiologists are responsible for their patients in the recovery room until the patient is awake, stable, and pain free.



Your Anesthesiologist, Dr.

_____ can be reached by pager through the hospital's main switchboard at 416.756.6002

The following nerve block was performed for your surgery:

_____ Your nerve block is expected to last until _____ am/pm.

Depending on the medication used and your body's response to the medication, your nerve block may wear off earlier or last longer than anticipated.

Department of Anesthesiology

4001 Leslie Avenue
North York, ON M2K 1E1
T 416.756.6520

Visit our virtual tour at
nygh.on.ca

000003

Discharge Instructions for Peripheral Nerve Block Patients

What to expect after a nerve block?

Nerve blocks affect many different types of nerves, including nerves that control muscles, pain, and temperature sensation.

NERVE BLOCKS CAUSE FEELINGS OF:

- Numbness
- Tingling
- Heaviness
- Weakness or inability to move your arm or leg
- A feeling that your arm or leg has "fallen asleep"

A nerve block can last anywhere from a few hours to over 36 hours, depending on the medications and the amount used by your Anesthesiologist. Usually, feelings of weakness wear off first. The tingling and heaviness wear off next. Finally, you may start to notice pain, although the pain may appear before the weakness and the tingling sensation wear off. Once a nerve block starts to wear off, it is usually completely gone within 60 minutes.

Certain nerve blocks may cause other symptoms.

IF YOU HAD A SHOULDER BLOCK OR A BLOCK NEAR YOUR COLLAR BONE, YOU MAY EXPERIENCE SYMPTOMS LIKE:

- Mild shortness of breath
- Hoarse voice
- Blurry vision
- Unequal pupils
- Drooping of your face on the same side as the nerve block

These are common side effects of this type of nerve block. These symptoms usually go away within 12 hours.

If these symptoms do not go away, please page the Anesthesiologist at the phone number listed on the last page.

If you have severe or prolonged shortness of breath, please go to the nearest emergency room.

If you continue to feel the effects of the nerve block for longer than 48 hours, call your Anesthesiologist. If you don't get a call back within an hour, please call the Department of Anesthesiology during office hours at 416.756.6520.

Protection of a numb arm or leg

After a nerve block, you can not feel pain, pressure, or extremes in temperature on the operated arm/leg. Putting you more at risk for injury. For example, it is possible to burn your numb arm or leg on a hot stove without knowing it. Here are some helpful tips to help protect your arm or leg while it is numb:

While awake, change the position of your arm/leg often.

While sleeping, pad your arm/leg with pillows to avoid rolling on it or putting too much pressure on it.

If you had a shoulder or arm block, sleep in a recliner with pillows under your arm to avoid rolling onto your numb arm as you sleep.

If you have a cast or tight dressing, check the colour of your fingers/toes every couple of hours. Call your surgeon if they look discoloured.

If you had a shoulder, arm, or hand block, you may go home with a sling. Wearing the sling

helps keep your arm in a safe position until the nerve block completely wears off. You may need assistance from family members with tasks such as dressing, eating, and washing.

If you had a leg block, you may have difficulty putting weight on that leg. You may be sent home with crutches to use until the nerve block wears off. Use extreme caution with stairs and do not drive until your surgeon says you can.

Use caution in cold weather. Your numb arm/leg will not be able to feel extremes in temperatures. Be sure to cover your limb appropriately before going outside to prevent frostbite.

Ask your family or other support people to help with the above hints.

Pain Medications

If needed, your surgeon will give you a prescription for pain medication. Start taking this medication as soon as the nerve block begins to wear off. Take pain medication before the pain becomes too severe. Keep in mind that nerve blocks often wear off in the middle of the night. It is a good idea to take your pain medication as prescribed before going to sleep, even if you have no pain, so that you won't wake up in pain.

Nausea is a common side effect of many pain medications. Eating something before taking pain medications can help prevent nausea.