

# EPIDURAL TOP UP PLAN FOR ADULTS

NB: Standard Epidural Solution = Fentanyl 2mcg/ml in Bupivacaine 0.1%

*EPIDURAL NOT WORKING – PATIENT COMPLAINS OF PAIN*

- CHECK PUMP WORKING – FLASHING TRIANGLES
- LOOSE CONNECTION & CATHETER LEAKS
- CATHETER DISPLACED
- ASSESS THE BLOCK – USE ICE OR ETHYL CHLORIDE

*SOME SENSORY BLOCK*

YES

BUT NOT COVERING WOUND  
Top-up 5-15ml of standard epidural solution  
DEPENDING ON LEVEL OF BLOCK  
And reassess in 30-40 minutes

*ADEQUATE BLOCK LEVEL*

YES

Increase epidural  
infusion by 30% up to  
20ml/hour\*

NO

*PATCHY/UNILATERAL  
BLOCK*

Consider:

- Withdraw catheter by 1-2cm
- Change position of patient

Top up with 10-15ml standard  
epidural solution  
And reassess in 30-40 minutes

*ADEQUATE BLOCK LEVEL*

YES

Increase epidural  
infusion by 30% up  
to 20ml/hour

NO

Consider:  
• reinsertion of epidural  
• PCA

NO

10-15ml of standard epidural solution  
And reassess in 30-40 minutes

*NO BLOCK*

10ml 0.25% Bupivacaine  
And reassess in 30-40 minutes

*SENSORY BLOCK*

YES

Increase epidural  
infusion by 30% up  
to 20ml/hour

NO

Consider:  
• reinsertion of epidural  
• PCA

- \* Consider Fentanyl 4mcg/ml but should be made up by UCH Pharmacy Production.
- No epidural bags should be made up on the ward
- ❖ Always consider optimizing simple analgesia

APPROVED BY:  
REVIEW DATE: