

Sympathetic Nerve Block

These types of procedures can be beneficial in helping people with chronic pain. Your doctor will target a bundle of nerves with a numbing medication to block the nerves from communicating pain sensations to the brain. These blocks are intended to improve function and increase the use of the leg/foot or arm/hand. You may feel warm sensations during the procedure.

Pre-Procedure

- When you arrive, you will check in with registration and will be given a short questionnaire to fill out about your symptoms.
- A staff member will bring you to a suite to verify your health information, medications, allergies, and the intended procedure.
- We will perform a few short tests to be certain the procedure is safe
 - o Blood pressure, heart rate, and oxygen saturation
 - o **Blood sugar – only if** you take insulin products and are receiving a steroid
 - o **INR – only if** you take Coumadin/Warfarin and were asked to hold the medication for the procedure
- We will also perform external temperature checks before and after your procedure for comparison. This can be an indication of a good block.

During the Procedure

- You will be transported to the procedure room where all details will be verified with you, the staff, and your doctor.
- You will see an x-ray machine in the room, which is used to:
 - o Guide the doctor and show important landmarks in the spine
 - o Show the doctor where to inject the drug with the use of contrast dye (please inform the staff if you have a contrast dye allergy)
- You will be assisted onto the procedure table
- Your doctor will clean the skin to help prevent infection
- Your doctor will insert a very small needle to numb the skin
- The procedure is very brief and is tolerated very well
- A Band-Aid is usually placed at the site of the procedure

Post-Procedure

- Staff will check on you to make sure you are doing well
- They will take at least one more blood pressure reading
- You will have to stay for at least 15 minutes after the procedure to repeat temperature tests
- The staff will let you go when you feel ready and they feel you're ready