

# Stellate Ganglion Block

## Stellate Ganglion Block

A stellate ganglion block is a treatment to relieve pain by numbing a nerve that may be causing the pain.

The nerve receiving the numbing medicine is a sympathetic nerve. The numbing medicine will block the nerve from sending pain signals you can feel.

The injection site affects the upper portion of the sympathetic nervous system, controlled in the neck area.

## Before the Block

- Arrange for someone to drive you home after the injection because you may have some numbness that could make driving difficult.
- If you take blood thinner such as warfarin (Coumadin®), heparin, clopidogrel (Plavix®) or ticlopidine (Ticlid®):
  - Call the Patient Care Line at 651-241-7365 as soon as you schedule your appointment.  
You will receive special directions.
- Do not eat any solid food for 6 hours before the injection.
- You may drink clear liquids up to 2 hours before the injection.
- Take your regular medicine(s) with a small sip of water.

## Your Appointment

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m. / p.m.

With: \_\_\_\_\_

To cancel, please call the United Pain Center at 651-241-7246 at least 24 hours before your appointment.

## After the Block

- You will be in the clinic recovery room for a while so the nurses can watch to see if the injection is effective and to check for any reaction.
- You may have numbness which could limit your ability to do things like lifting weights or using machinery. Plan for quiet activity the rest of the day.
- You may have slight drooping of your face and eyelid (on the side where you received the injection).
- You may have hoarseness of your voice.
- You may have a temporary lump in your throat.

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- You may have one pupil that is smaller (constricted) than the other.
- You may have nasal congestion and watery eyes.
- The injection site may be sore for a few days. You should ice the site three times a day for 20 minutes until the soreness is gone.
- Avoid heavy exercise after the block. Read your discharge instructions for when you may return to your normal activities.

## Follow-up Appointment

Before you leave, a nurse will review your discharge instructions and plans for a follow-up appointment.

## Side Effects

Infection is a potential complication. Your doctor will explain any other possible complications to you before the injection.

If you have any of the following symptoms, call the Patient Care Line at 651-241-7365:

- fever
- unusual swelling
- pain that gets worse or headache that won't go away
- drainage
- warmth and redness in the injection area
- nausea (upset stomach) or vomiting (throwing up).

## Whom To Call With Questions

Call the Patient Care Line at 651-241-7365  
Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.