



Lumbar Sympathetic Block

What is a lumbar sympathetic block?

A lumbar sympathetic block is a procedure which is used to diagnose and sometimes treat certain pain disorders of your leg or foot.

Special nerves, which control blood flow and which can be causing some of your pain or altered sensitivity, can be found at the side of your spinal column in your lower back. A lumbar sympathetic block interrupts the activity of these nerves. Depending on the success of the first injection, repeated injections may be necessary to help to treat your pain problem.

What can I expect at the Pain Center?

A Pain Management Specialist at the clinic will assess your pain condition, take a medical history, and examine you to see if the procedure is a potentially beneficial option. At this time any precautions that need to be taken based on the status of your health may be discussed. Additional or alternative treatment options can be discussed. After this examination, the procedure can then be scheduled.

What should I do before the procedure?

Do not eat or drink non-clear liquids 6-8 hours prior to your procedure. You may drink a small amount (a few ounces) of clear liquid (water) up to 2-3 hours before your procedure. Take your routine medications the day of your procedure as you normally would with a small amount of water, unless instructed otherwise by the physician. If you take pain medications, do not take a dose 2 hours prior to your procedure time, unless otherwise instructed by the physician. If you take blood thinners (such as Coumadin), or you are a diabetic, you will need to follow special directions which the physician will give you prior to the procedure. It is mandatory that you arrange for someone to drive you home from the ambulatory surgical center after your procedure. Additional instructions may be given by the physician if necessary depending on your health status.

Where will the procedure be done?

In the ambulatory surgical center as an outpatient.

Will I be asleep for the procedure?

Monitored anesthesia care with light sedation may be medically indicated, based upon your health status, or to reduce unintentional movement during the procedure. Your physician will discuss this with you at the time of your appointment.

When will I have some relief of pain?

You may receive immediate pain relief after the procedure. However, it is more typical for pain relief to occur gradually over several days to weeks. If a patient receives partial improvement, then repeat injections or continuation of a short series of injections may be indicated. If the pain goes away then repeat injections are not needed.

Will I be able to drive afterward?

No, do not operate motorized vehicles/equipment (ie cars, lawn mowers, power tools, kitchen appliances, etc) until the day after your procedure, especially if you have received sedation.

Will I be able to resume my normal activities after the procedure?

Yes, the next day. Just maintain good body mechanics and posture and continue with physical therapy or your home exercise program.

What are the risks of the procedure?

A full discussion of the risks of the procedure will occur when you meet the Pain Specialist who will perform the injection. Overall, the risks are relatively low.

If you have further questions, you can ask the Pain Management Specialist at the time of your appointment.

At **Pain Diagnostics and Treatment Center** we are dedicated to improving the quality of life for patients whose lives have been affected by both acute and chronic pain conditions. Our goal is to prevent acute pain conditions from progressing to debilitating chronic pain syndromes and to allow for a better quality of life.

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