

- There are very important nerves in the spine, but **serious nerve injury is extremely rare** (less than 1 in 10,000 cases).
- **Headache:** On rare occasions the needle may be placed too far and spinal fluid encountered. This may lead to headache that requires further treatment. If you have a headache, take some Paracetamol, drink plenty of water and lie flat. If it continues for more than twenty-four hours please contact your GP or Pain Clinic.
- **Injection treatments are not always effective and may not help your pain.**
- (Injections in thoracic area only) Injury or collapse of the lung (pneumothorax). This is very rare. **If you get chest pain or breathlessness, you should seek immediate medical help.**
- **In rare circumstances, steroid use can damage your eyesight.** You should report any new visual disturbance to your doctor.

What follow-up will be arranged?

- The team will discuss any follow up with you.
- Usually you will be contacted by the Pain Team 4-6 weeks after your procedure.
- If you have any questions/ concerns you can contact the Pain Team.
- To leave patient experience feedback please go online to www.ruh.nhs.uk/FFT

More in-depth patient information is available: www.fpm.ac.uk/about-pain-medicine-patients-relatives/patient-information-leaflets

References: Faculty of Pain Medicine of the Royal College of Anaesthetists. www.fpm.ac.uk

If you have any queries please contact:

The Pain Clinic

Zone F, Department F18
RNHRD and Brownsword Therapies Centre - Royal United Hospitals Bath

Intervention Follow-Up Advice Line: 01225 826896

(This is an Answer-phone Service, please leave a message. Phone messages checked 14:00-15:00 Monday to Friday)

If you need advice during out-of-hours, please contact your GP or NHS111. For Emergency please dial 999.

The RUH, where you matter

Royal United Hospitals Bath
NHS Foundation Trust
Combe Park, Bath, BA1 3NG
01225 428331 | www.ruh.nhs.uk

Please contact the Patient Support and Complaints Team (PSCT) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email ruh-tr.psct@nhs.net or 01225 825656.

Date of publication: February 2023
Ref: RUH ANA/013
© Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust

Nerve Root Block

Pain Clinic
Patient Information Leaflet



Nerve Root Block

Checklist

- Bring a list of all current medications
- Make arrangements for someone to collect you after the procedure
- Wear loose comfortable clothing
- Glasses (if you need them to read)
- Blood thinning medication e.g. warfarin, clopidogrel, apixaban etc. will need to be stopped prior to your injection. Please ensure you have instructions from the Pain Team on how to manage these medications prior to your appointment.

Changes to your health

Please let your doctor know if:

- You have an infection
- You have started on anticoagulant or antiplatelet medications
- You have diabetes
- You have any allergies
- You are pregnant
- You are planning to travel abroad within 2 weeks of the injections.

Consent

The RUH, where you matter

If you have any questions before your appointment you can contact the Pain Team. **Your doctor will obtain your signed consent before the injection.**

What is a Nerve Root Block?

A nerve root block is an injection of a mixture of local anaesthetic and steroid around a nerve as it exits the spine. This is used when a particular nerve in the lower back is inflamed.

The procedure

- Observations will be taken.
- The injection site will be cleaned with antiseptic solution (this can feel cold).
- An injection of local anaesthetic will be used to numb the area (this will sting).
- The needle is guided next to the nerve place by the doctor using an x-ray machine.
- You may feel pressure or tightness as the injection(s) are made.

Aftercare

- After the procedure you will be taken to recovery and monitored.
- You will usually be able to return home 30 minutes after the injection.
- Ideally, you should arrange for someone to stay with you for 24 hours.

- You should not drive, operate machinery, sign legal documents, provide childcare unsupervised or drink alcohol until fit to do so.
- You may experience some soreness or aching at the injection site.
- **Please keep the area of the injection dry for 24 hours following the procedure.**
- Do not worry if your pain feels worse for a few days, this sometimes happens; take your regular medications and this should settle.
- As your pain decreases, try to gently increase your exercise.
- Try not to overdo things on a good day so that you end up paying for it with more pain the following day.

Possible side effects and risks

As with any procedure side effects may occur. These are usually minor but there are risks with this procedure.

- **Mild local tenderness/bruising:** This usually settles over the first few days.
- Local anaesthetic may rarely spread to surrounding areas causing some **numbness and/or weakness.** This is temporary.
- **Infection:** This is rare. You should seek medical help if there is local warmth or redness over the site of injection with tenderness and/or you feel hot and unwell. This may require antibiotic treatment.