

Radiofrequency Denervation

Pain Clinic Patient Information Leaflet

- Mild local tenderness/bruising: This usually settles over the first few days.
- A prickling sunburn-like sensation that usually gets better over time.
- Rarely, the local anaesthetic may spread to surrounding areas causing some **numbness and/or weakness**. This is only 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.
- There are very important nerves in the spine, but **serious nerve injury is extremely rare** (less than 1 in 10,000 cases).
- Steroid can have varied effects: flushing, menstrual disturbances, weight gain, increase in blood sugar levels and mood changes. These effects are temporary and more likely with repeated injections.

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 Clinic.
- 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 are checked 14:00-15:00 Monday to Friday, we will aim to call back in 24-48 hours)

If you need advice during out-of-hours, please contact your GP or NHS 111. 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: January 2024 RUH : ANA024
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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. may need to be stopped prior to your injection. Please ensure you have instructions from the Pain Clinic 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 an anticoagulant or antiplatelet medication
- You have diabetes
- You have any allergies
- You are pregnant
- You are planning to travel abroad within 2 weeks of the injections.

Consent

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

The RUH, where you matter

What is Radiofrequency Denervation?

Radiofrequency Denervation is a procedure that involves heating specific nerves with microwave-type energy. The aim is to disable the nerves for a long period of time to provide long-lasting pain relief. A needle is guided to the treatment site suspected of being a source of your pain and is then connected to the radiofrequency machine. Radiofrequency Denervation may be offered if a diagnostic nerve block injection has proven to produce an excellent but temporary response.

The procedure

- Your observations will be taken.
- You will be helped into the correct position and the team will ensure you are comfortable throughout.
- The injection site will be cleaned with an antiseptic solution (this can feel cold).
- An X-ray machine or an ultrasound machine will be used to guide the needle to the correct target.
- A Radiographer may be present to operate the X-ray machine.
- An injection of local anaesthetic will be used to numb the area (this will sting) to reduce any procedural discomfort and usually some steroid to reduce any discomfort in the days following the procedure.
- The doctor will direct the radiofrequency needles to the area(s) suspected to be a source of pain.

- The doctor may ask you if you feel any tingling feeling or muscle twitching around where the needles are placed as they complete the procedure.

Aftercare

- After the procedure you will be taken to the recovery room and monitored.
- You will usually be able to return home approximately one hour 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 for at least 24 hours and 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.
- Try not to overdo things on a good day as this can lead to increased pain levels and reduced activities for the next day or so.
- As your pain decreases, use this time to aid your rehabilitation and try to gently increase your exercise and activity levels.

Possible side effects and risks

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

- **Injection treatments are not always effective and may not help your pain.**