

- 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.
- In rare circumstances, steroid use can damage your eyesight. You should report any new visual disturbance to your doctor.
- **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.

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 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.

Greater Occipital Nerve Block

Pain Clinic Patient Information Leaflet



Greater Occipital Nerve Block

Checklist

- Bring a list of all current medications
- Plan arrangements for someone to collect you after the procedure
- Wear loose comfortable clothing
- Glasses (if you need them to read)
- If you are taking any Blood thinning medication (e.g. warfarin, clopidogrel, apixaban etc) please inform the Pain Team prior to your appointment to ensure you get advice on how to manage this medication.

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

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

The RUH, where you matter

What is a Greater Occipital Nerve Block?

The Greater Occipital Nerves travel up on each side of the back of the head. The nerve block is an injection, performed at the back of the head containing some local anaesthetic, and a steroid. A steroid is a strong anti-inflammatory medication, it can help reduce inflammation and therefore reduce pain coming from the occipital nerve. It is intended to provide you medium to long term pain relief.

The procedure

- The Nursing team will check your observations and complete the pre-procedure assessment.
- You will be helped into the correct and comfortable position for the procedure.
- The injection site will be cleaned with an antiseptic solution (this can feel cold).
- The needle is guided by the doctor, you may feel pressure or tightness as the injection(s) are made. The injection hurts briefly, like any injection.

Aftercare

- After the procedure you will be taken to recovery and monitored.
- You will usually be able to return home 15 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 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.**
- **Mild local tenderness/bruising/bump at the injection site:** This usually settles over the first few days.
- Some people report dizziness after the injection, so this is why we ask you to stay afterwards.
- Local anaesthetic may rarely spread to surrounding areas causing some **numbness and/or weakness.** This is temporary.