

# Diagnostic Nerve Block

## Pain Clinic Patient Information Leaflet

- **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.

- Nerve damage is **extremely rare** (less than 1 in 10,000 cases).

### Completing a pain diary

A pain diary helps us to understand your pain levels after your diagnostic nerve block. Please record your pain scores over the next 24 hours on the diary that we provide you on the day of the procedure. This diary will help us plan further management of your pain.

### What follow-up will be arranged?

- The Pain Clinic will discuss any follow up appointments with you.
- Usually you will be contacted by the Pain Clinic Nurse 1-2 weeks after your procedure.

If you have any questions/concerns about your appointment you can contact the Pain Clinic Admin Team via telephone: **01225 824331**.

- To leave patient experience feedback please go online to [www.ruh.nhs.uk/FFT](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk/FFT)

### 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](http://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](mailto:ruh-tr.psct@nhs.net) or 01225 825656.



# Diagnostic Nerve Block

## Checklist

- Bring a list of all current medications
- Make arrangements for someone to collect you after the procedure
- Wear loose comfortable clothing
- Bring glasses (if you need them to read)
- Please inform the Pain Clinic if you take any blood thinning medication e.g. warfarin, clopidogrel, apixaban. The Pain Clinic will provide instructions 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

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 diagnostic nerve block?

A diagnostic nerve block is an injection of local anaesthetic on or near a specific nerve to help diagnose the source of your pain. It is a minimally invasive procedure that may temporarily relieve joint or nerve pain. This is not a treatment; this is only a test injection. If you have temporary relief from this procedure, it can help predict how your pain may respond to further treatments like Radiofrequency Denervation.

## 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). An injection of local anaesthetic will be used to numb the area (this will sting).
- Your Pain Consultant may use ultrasound or x-ray imaging to precisely guide the needle depending on your specific procedure.

## Aftercare

- After the procedure you will be taken to recovery and monitored.

- You will usually be able to return home 15-30 minutes after the injection.
- Ideally, you should arrange for someone to stay with you for 24 hours.
- Please keep the area of the injection dry for 24 hours following the procedure.
- 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.
- **You should try and continue your daily activities, paying attention to your pain levels throughout the day.**
- Do not worry if your pain feels worse for a few days after, this sometimes happens; take your regular medications and this should settle.

## 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.
- There may be mild local tenderness/bruising: This usually settles over the first few days.
- Local anaesthetic may spread to surrounding areas causing some numbness and/or weakness. This is temporary.