

UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO MEDICAL CENTER

Medical Rehabilitation Spine Clinic

Spinal Injection Procedure Education Confirmation Form

_____ Patient Information Booklet Received

_____ Logistics of Injection Procedure Explained by _____

Possible Side Effects And Complications of Procedure Explained by

_____, M.D.

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

A GUIDE TO SPINAL INJECTION PROCEDURES

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What is a Spinal Injection?

The spinal injection you will have is also known as a block. Following your evaluation at the Medical Rehabilitation Spine Clinic, a determination will be made using objective findings, such as your physical examination, test results (EMG, lab work), and radiology studies (MRI, CT Scan, Bone Scan) as well as subjective information (the actual symptoms and pain you are experiencing). We then decide whether to do an injection and, if it is to be done, which specific block you should get.

The injection is performed under x-ray guidance, also known as fluoroscopy. This enables the physician to visualize your spine to ensure accurate needle placement. The benefits of having the injection done under x-ray guidance are, reduced risk of complication and improved chances of positive results. This information is determined by comparing this approach to blind injections (without x-ray guidance). Published reports have shown that blind injections deposit medication in the wrong place 25-40% of the time.

What Medication Do I Get During the Procedure?

Generally, there are substances injected during the block procedure. They are local anesthetic (to numb the area), contrast agent or dye (to outline the structures in your spine) and steroid (the medication used to reduce inflammation and decrease your pain). You should report any known allergy to one of these substances to a member of the Penn Spine Center team immediately. If the allergy is to the contrast agent, or if you have a reaction to seafood, shellfish or iodine, you will require an allergy preparation prior to your injection. A member of the Penn Spine Center team will supply you with a prescription and explain how the medication should be taken.

Are There Different Types of Injections?

A variety of injections are performed at the University of Toledo Medical Center and each one is directed at specific structures in your spine. All of the injections fall under two general categories: diagnostic block, (test injections where only a contrast agent and local anesthetic are used) and therapeutic blocks (where a contrast agent, local anesthetic, and steroid are used). A diagnostic block is required when the source of your pain has not been clearly identified. It is a test used to determine which spinal structure is causing your symptoms. In order to be effective, the diagnostic injection must be performed while you are experiencing your usual amount of discomfort. If you are pain-free the day of your scheduled appointment, please cancel and reschedule. PLEASE DO NOT TAKE YOUR PAIN MEDICINE THIS DAY. During the procedure, the local anesthetic will be injected at the site most likely to be causing your pain. Shortly thereafter, you will be assessed by Dr. Patel to determine whether the local anesthetic has relieved your pain. It is important to remember diagnostic blocks are tests. They are not intended to cure your problem. Once the local anesthetic has worn off (within one hour)

your usual symptoms will return and sometimes there may be a temporary flare of your usual symptom.

You may require one or more diagnostic blocks. The number of diagnostic blocks you receive is determined by your response immediately following your initial injection. If you have a positive response (you were significantly relieved of pain immediately following the injection), you will then be scheduled to return at future date to receive therapeutic injections. If you do not have pain relief, another diagnostic block will is typically required.

Therapeutic injections differ from diagnostic ones in only one way. In addition to a local anesthetic and contrast agent, a therapeutic block utilizes a steroid. The steroids used in these injections do not build muscles; they are not the kind of medicine the body builders and athletes take. The purpose of the steroid is to reduce inflammation, thereby decreasing pain. The therapeutic injection will not give you immediate relief of your symptoms. The steroid effect begins anywhere from 4 to 6 hours to one week after your block. It provides a gradual but steady relief of your symptoms. It is not a "quick fix".

The injections performed at the University of Toledo Medical Center are one component of a total rehabilitation program. They are used in conjunction with a physical therapy and medication regimen to maximize the probability of a good outcome. Therefore, you should continue doing everything you were instructed to do in your initial evaluation, unless told otherwise by the University of Toledo Medical Center team.

What Happens After the Injection?

After your injection is completed you will be brought back to the University of Toledo Medical Center where you can change into your clothes. A member of the University of Toledo Medical Center team will then give you any additional instructions you may need.

What Can I Expect?

The most common side effect of this procedure is a transient increase in pain for the first 24-72 hours after the injection. This typically occurs because the substances injected are placed in an area where there is already inflammation. You should not be alarmed by this. Your symptoms should gradually diminish in the days following the block.

There may also be some tenderness at the needle insertion site. Should you experience this problem, you can place an ice pack on the area to reduce the discomfort, as often as you require.

The above side effects are not a reason to cancel you subsequent injections. Your injections should be canceled if you have 90-100% symptom relief, on a

consistent basis, which lasts up to the day prior to your next block. You should then call our office and speak with a member of the Penn Spine Center team to determine whether your block should be canceled.

The expected success rate for these injections depends on your diagnosis. You should be aware the procedure might be ineffective. It should also be noted; the duration of the procedures effectiveness is unpredictable.

Can All Spine Problems be Treated by a Block?

The injections we perform are not appropriate for everyone. It is conceivable your condition cannot be treated with non-surgical measures. If this applies to your situation, surgery may then be recommended. Likewise, if there are not medical remedies for your condition, you will be apprised of that opinion at the time of your initial evaluation at the University of Toledo Medical Center.

Should I Do Anything to Prepare for the Procedure?

If your procedure is scheduled in the morning, you should have a light breakfast such as toast and cereal, nothing heavy.

Those patients scheduled for afternoon procedures should eat a normal breakfast (i.e. cereal, toast, etc.) and a light lunch, such as a sandwich and soup. You should not have any caffeine or products containing caffeine. You may take your regularly scheduled medications however there are some exceptions. Hold any anticoagulants, such as Coumadin, Heparin, Plavix or Lovenox, for three days prior to your procedure. Hold glucophage the day of the procedure and 48 hours post procedure. If you are having a test injection, hold your pain medication. Please call the University of Toledo Medical Center staff prior to your appointment if you have any questions or concerns.

You should arrive at the office (George Isaac Surgery Center) one-half hour prior to your procedure. You will then be asked to change into a patient gown and be taken to the fluoroscopy suite, where the injection is performed. You should expect to be here approximately 1-2 hours for morning procedures and anywhere from 1-2 hours for afternoon procedures. You must have someone drive you home after the procedure.

What are the Potential Complications?

As with any invasive procedure, there are possible complications you may experience. These include: allergic reaction, infection, excessive bleeding, paralysis, lightheadedness, permanent nerve damage, dural puncture, seizure, cardiovascular collapse, headache, fainting, and death. A recent review of 888 blocks completed at the Penn Spine Center during a 6-month interval demonstrated 8 short-term and no long-term complications. If you

have any additional questions about the potential risk factors, a member of the University of Toledo Medical Center team will be happy to discuss them with you.

**For What Reasons Should
I Call the University of Toledo Spine Center?**

- A temperature of 100 degrees or more
- Excruciating pain
- Lost of bowel or bladder control
- Loss of motor function in areas or legs
- Headache in the standing or sitting position, which is fully relieved by lying down

Who Should I Call If There is a Problem?

- Weekdays, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. University of Toledo Spine Center, 419-383-4022
- Evenings and weekends, call the on call pager 419-218-4552.