

Pain Management

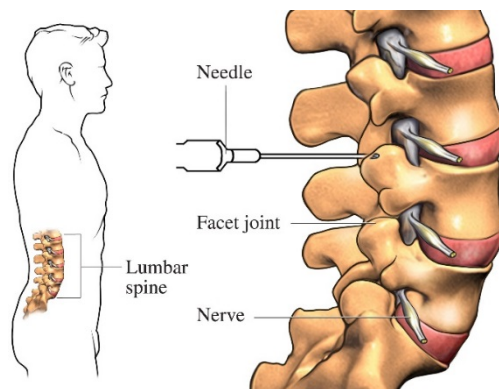
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Facet Joints and Medial Branch Nerves

Facet joints are small joints in back of the spine. They make connections between each vertebra and allow you to twist or bend your back or neck.

Medial branch nerves: These are the very small nerve branches that carry pain messages from the facet joints and the muscles around the joints.



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Purpose of medial block

We do this to confirm the diagnosis of facet joint disease and to find out if the facet joints are causing your pain.

How we do this block

Takes approximately 30 minutes

1. We start an IV and give medicine to relax.
2. You lie on your stomach on the x-ray table.
3. We clean the skin on your back to help decrease chance of infection.
4. Doctor injects small area of skin with numbing medicine.
5. X-ray guides your doctor during the injection.

We give an injection of anesthetic and steroid in the area of the medial branch nerves.

- Injection blocks messages sent by nerves.
- If these nerves are sending the pain signals, pain will be reduced after the injection.

We call you several days before the procedure

We will tell you:

- Where and when to arrive.
- When to stop drinking and eating.

Medicines and Allergies:

- We ask for name and dose of all medicines your child takes.
- We ask if your child has allergies.

Note: You may need to stop taking some of your medicines before the procedure.

Please know:

You should *not* have this procedure if you:

1. Have allergies to any x-ray dye, seafood, Lasix or and of the medicines we may inject.
2. Are on a blood thinning medicine such as Coumadin, heparin, or Lovenox.
3. Have an active infection.
4. Have a temperature over 101 degrees.
5. Have a low platelet count.

Risks and Side Effects

Generally speaking, this procedure is safe. However, like any procedure there are risks, side effects, and the possibility of complications.

These may include but are not limited to:

- Tenderness
- Bleeding at the injection site
- Infection
- Bruising
- Nerve damage
- Temporary weakness
- Allergic reaction to anesthetic or medicine

These instructions are only general guidelines. Your health care providers may give you special instructions. If you have any questions or concerns, please call your health care providers.