



## DIFFERENTIAL SPINAL BLOCK

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| <b><i>What is it?</i></b>               | A differential spinal block involves an injection of medication into the spinal canal.   |
| <b><i>Why is it done?</i></b>           | A differential spinal block is helpful in determining the type of pain that you may be experiencing and where the pain originates (comes from). Your response to the spinal block helps the physician determine the future direction of treatment.   |
| <b><i>How is it done?</i></b>           | An intravenous (IV) catheter (tube) will be inserted in your vein. When you are in the procedure room, you will be asked to lie on your side on a cushioned x-ray table. A small needle is used to inject a local anesthetic (numbing medication) into your skin in the area of your low back. You may notice some stinging. Next a slightly larger needle will be placed to access your spinal canal in the lower back area. After the needle is placed, a series of solutions will be injected. After each solution, a new history and a brief physical exam will be performed. The final injection is a solution of local anesthetic (medication that numbs a specific area). The needle is then removed and a small band aid is applied. You will experience numbness, and be unable to move from your breast bone to your toes. This normally wears off after one to three hours. |
| <b><i>Is there any preparation?</i></b> | <b>YOU MUST NOT EAT OR DRINK AFTER MIDNIGHT the night before your procedure.</b> You may wish to bring a book to occupy yourself during the recovery period. <b>YOU MUST ALSO ARRANGE FOR SOMEONE TO DRIVE YOU HOME FROM THE PROCEDURE.</b>  |
| <b><i>What to wear?</i></b>             | Please wear loose, comfortable clothing. Please leave all jewelry and other valuables at home.   |
| <b><i>How long does it take?</i></b>    | We ask that you arrive 30 - 45 minutes before the scheduled time of your procedure. The procedure lasts about 15 to 30 minutes, and you will be in the recovery area for about four hours.   |
| <b><i>Risks</i></b>                     | The risks of this procedure include , but are not limited to : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Pain in the area where the needle(s) was inserted. This can last for two to three days, and can be treated by using ice and mild analgesics (pain medication) such as Motrin, Naprosyn or Tylenol.</li> <li>* Temporary numbness or weakness in one or both legs. This is normal. You should have assistance with walking and should not drive for 24 hours.</li> <li>* Bleeding in the injection area.</li> <li>* Infection in the injection area.</li> <li>* Increased pain</li> <li>* Nerve damage, paralysis, stroke and even death.</li> </ul>  |