



Splanchnic Block

<i>What is it?</i>	A splanchnic block is an injection administered into the spine. A fluoroscope (x-ray machine) assists the physician in locating the nerve roots that are inflamed and contributing to your pain.
<i>Why is it done?</i>	This procedure is performed to diagnose or treat pain that originates in the chest and upper abdomen (pancreas, liver, stomach or upper intestine). Nerves that serve the autonomous (involuntary) nervous system and abdominal organs are located in front of the spinal column. Sometimes a series of blocks is required to achieve maximum benefit.
<i>How is it done?</i>	When you are in the procedure room, you will be asked to lie face down on a cushioned x-ray table. A small needle is used to inject a local anesthetic (numbing medication) to numb the skin. Next, a long thin needle is placed in the side of the mid to upper back and advanced to the front of the spinal column; placement is confirmed with the fluoroscope and injection of contrast dye. After placement of one or two needles a solution of local anesthetic is injected. The medication will travel through the spinal column to the sympathetic nerves in the chest and abdomen. The needles are removed and small band aids are applied.
<i>Is there any preparation?</i>	You may receive conscious sedation. Conscious sedation is medication given through an intravenous (IV) catheter (tube) in a vein in your arm. The medication will help you relax, but it will not put you to sleep. If you opt to have conscious sedation, you MUST NOT EAT OR DRINK for 4 hours before your procedure. However, you may take your medication with a small sip of water .
<i>What to wear?</i>	Please wear loose, comfortable clothing. Please leave all jewelry and other valuables at home.
<i>How long does it take?</i>	We ask that you arrive 30-45 minutes before the scheduled time of your procedure. The procedure lasts about 15 - 30 minutes, and you will be in the recovery area about 15 minutes.
<i>Risks</i>	The risks of this procedure include , but are not limited to : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Pain in the area where the needle(s) was inserted. The pain 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. * A reaction to the local anesthetic or dye. These reactions usually do not require further treatment. However, a reaction to the contrast dye may result in sneezing, hives, swelling of the face and throat, respiratory difficulties and shock. Medication and/or respiratory assistance may be required. * 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. * Bleeding in the injection area. * Infection in the injection area. * Increased pain * Nerve damage, paralysis, stroke and even death.