



## STELLATE GANGLION BLOCK

<b>What is it?</b>	The stellate ganglion is a small collection of nerves in the neck, next to the trachea and just below the Adam's apple. Most of the nerves that supply the involuntary functions of the arm and face on either side of the body (such as sweating, hair follicle activity and blood vessel size) originate from this collection of nerves. These are the nerves that control sweating, hair follicle activity, and blood vessel size. A stellate ganglion block is an injection performed with the aid of fluoroscopy (x-ray machine) that places medication in this area.
<b>Why is it done?</b>	A stellate ganglion block may be done for conditions involved with sympathetic pain in the arms or face, such as reflex sympathetic dystrophy (RSD) also called complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS). Often, pain in the upper extremity may be non-specific (hard to describe), in which there is no known cause. A stellate ganglion block may help define the type of pain you are experiencing and which nerves are involved.
<b>How is it done?</b>	Prior to the start of the procedure an intravenous (IV) catheter (tube) is placed in your vein. Once you are in the procedure room you will be asked to lie face up on the cushioned x-ray table. A small needle is used to inject a local anesthetic (numbing medication) to numb the skin on the affected side next to the trachea. Next a small needle is placed into the area under direct fluoroscopy (x-ray), sterile tubing is attached to the needle and anesthetic (numbing) medication is slowly injected through the tubing. The needle and tubing are removed and a small band aid is applied.
<b>Is there any preparation?</b>	<b>YOU MUST NOT EAT OR DRINK AFTER MIDNIGHT BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE.</b> However, you may take your medication with a <u>small sip of water</u> . You may choose to receive conscious sedation (this would have been discussed at your office visit). Conscious sedation is medication given through an IV in your arm prior to the procedure. The medication will help you relax, but it will not put you to sleep.
<b>What to wear?</b>	Please wear loose, comfortable clothing. Please leave all jewelry and other valuables at home.
<b>How long does it take?</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 about 15 minutes.
<b>Risks</b>	The risks of this procedure include, but are not limited to: <u>*A successful stellate ganglion block may result in a Horner's Syndrome on the involved side. This consists of: pupil constriction(decrease in size), hot red face, red eye and drooping eyelid. The Horner's syndrome will normally dissipate in four to six hours after the block.</u> <u>*You may experience hoarseness. This should dissipate in four to six hours. You should not eat or drink for six hours if you experience hoarseness.</u> * Pain in the area where the needle(s) was inserted. This can last for two to three days. This can be treated by using ice and mild analgesics (pain medication) such as Motrin, Naprosyn or Tylenol. * Temporary numbness or weakness of your arm on the involved side. This is normal. You should not drive for 24 hours. * Bleeding in the injection area, * Infection in the injection area, * Increased pain *Seizure or difficulty breathing if the needle tip is placed in a blood vessel or near the spine. * Nerve damage, paralysis, stroke and even death.