



Third Occipital Nerve Block

<i>What is it?</i>	The third occipital nerve originates from the third cervical nerve root in the neck and continues over the back of the head. A third occipital nerve block is an injection performed in this area of the cervical spine (neck area). 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>	The third occipital nerve block is performed to relieve headaches. This headache typically originates at the back of the head and extends over the top of the head on one side. It is usually associated with arthritic inflammation or disturbance of the third occipital nerve.
<i>How is it done?</i>	When you are in the procedure room, you will be asked to lie face up on a cushioned x-ray table. A small needle is used to inject a local anesthetic (numbing medication) to numb the skin. This may sting a little. Next, with the assistance of fluoroscopy, a small needle is placed into the neck and dye is injected to confirm correct location of the needle tip and to ensure the solution injected is not being injected into a blood vessel. Multiple x-rays are taken to confirm correct position of the needle. A solution of local anesthetic (pain medication) and a cortisone derivative (anti-inflammatory medication) is then injected. The needle is removed and a small band aid is applied.
<i>Is there any preparation?</i>	You may receive conscious sedation. Prior to the start of the procedure, an intravenous (IV) catheter (tube) is placed in your vein so that you can receive conscious sedation. Conscious sedation is medication given through an IV (tube) 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. You will be in the recovery area about 15 minutes.
<i>Risks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The risks of this procedure include , but are not limited to : * 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. * 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. * Seizures * Difficulty breathing requiring ventilation (respirator). * Temporary numbness or weakness in one or both arms or 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.