

Interscalene Brachial Plexus Block / Axillary

What is it?	The interscalene block is an injection numbing the brachial plexus at the level of the nerve roots. The brachial plexus is a collection of nerves located in the neck and axilla (armpit), supplying the chest, shoulder and arm.
Why is it done?	This procedure is done to reduce pain in your shoulder and upper arm from prior shoulder surgery, injury or complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS) or reflex sympathetic dystrophy (RSD). It may also allow the physical therapist to manipulate the arm more effectively. Your doctor will tell you if he wants you to have physical therapy on the day of the procedure, after the procedure is finished.
How is it done?	When you are in the procedure room, you will be asked to lie on your back on a cushioned x-ray table. For an interscalene block, your arms will be at your side, with your head turned away from the side to be injected. A nurse may pull downward on your involved arm to facilitate the palpation of the landmarks. For an axillary block, the involved arm is positioned to allow visualization and palpation of the axilla (armpit). A small needle is used to inject a local anesthetic to numb the skin in the area of the injection. This may sting a little. Next, a small needle is placed and a nerve stimulator with a special insulated needle may be used to confirm the correct placement of the needle. Then 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.
What to wear?	Please wear loose, comfortable clothing. Please leave all jewelry and other valuables at home.
How long does it take?	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.
Is there any preparation?	You may receive conscious sedation. Conscious sedation is medication given through an intravenous (IV) catheter (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. You may, however, take your medication with a <u>small sip of water</u>.
Can I drive myself home after the procedure?	You must have someone available to drive you home after the procedure.
Risks of this procedure include, but are not limited to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Temporary hoarseness of your voice and and/or inability to completely open your eye on the side of the injection. This should end in 4 to 6 hours. * 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. * Seizure * Temporary numbness or weakness in your arm. This is normal. You should not drive for 24 hours. * Injury to the arm due to exposure to extreme hot or extreme cold or from over extension (movement past the normal range of motion) of your shoulder or elbow. (Wearing a sling while your arm is numb can help protect you from this.) * Bleeding, pain and bruising in the injection area, increased pain.

Instructions Regarding Your Procedure
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Will I receive a pre-procedure phone call?	A nurse from our office will call you 24-48 hours prior to your procedure. She will ask you a few important medical questions, AND she will confirm your appointment. We must have a verbal confirmation from you 24-48 hours prior to your procedure. Failure to return our call could result in your procedure being rescheduled.
Where can I obtain more procedure information?	Please visit our website www.nyspineandwellness.com . It contains demonstrations of some of the procedures we offer. We also have other helpful information.
Can I drive home from the procedure?	<input type="checkbox"/> You MUST have a ride home, and your driver should remain on site. You must not drive or operate heavy machinery for 24 hours.
Can I eat Breakfast? <i>*the box with a check applies to you</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, you can eat a light breakfast or light lunch <input type="checkbox"/> No, DO NOT EAT OR DRINK for 4 hours before your procedure. However, you may take your medicine but only with a small sip of water.
Should I stop taking aspirin?	If you take ASPIRIN or products containing ASPIRIN in doses greater than 325 mg/per day, you must stop taking it 7 days prior to your procedure (examples of ASPIRIN-containing products include but are not limited to: EXCEDRIN, FIORINAL, AND ALKA SELTZER, etc).
Can I take the aspirin prescribed for <u>cardiac</u> and or <u>stroke</u> prevention?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, you can continue to take your aspirin for cardiac or stroke prevention, not to exceed 325mg per day.
Can I take my blood thinner? <i>*the box with a check applies to you</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Our provider has advised you on the number of days to hold the blood thinner you take. <input type="checkbox"/> Our provider will have to contact the Doctor who has prescribed the blood thinner for you to learn how long it is safe for you to be off the medicine prior to your procedure. One of our nurses will call you when we have obtained that information.
Can I take my other medications? <i>*the box with a check applies to you</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, except for blood thinners. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, only with a small sip of water,(you must not take your blood thinner)
What time is my procedure?	You will receive a phone call one or two business days prior to your procedure to remind you of the time you should arrive for your procedure (usually 30-40 minutes prior to the scheduled time) and the location. PLEASE BE ON TIME. <i>*some patients may receive a call to confirm insurance information.</i>
How long will it take?	We ask that you plan 1½ -3 hours from the time you arrive at the center to the time you are discharged. Please understand that circumstances sometimes arise that are out of our control, which cause a longer delay. Please plan accordingly.
What do I bring?	You must bring the following <u>each time</u> you have a procedure: 1. Your current insurance information 2. A written list of all your current medications including the strength and frequency you take them. Please include over the counter medication, vitamins and herbal supplements.
What shall I wear?	Please wear comfortable loose fitting clothing.
Can I wear jewelry?	No. Please leave all jewelry and other valuables at home. We are unable to store them safely. Any body- piercing jewelry must be completely removed, as this may interfere with the x-ray machine.
What do I do if I am ill or have to cancel?	Please call the office 24 hours in advance if you are unable to keep your appointment. (315) 552-6700. We do charge patients for no shows.