

### GREATER OR LESSER OCCIPITAL NERVE BLOCK

<p><b><i>What is it?</i></b></p>	<p>Pain sensations in the scalp travel to the brain via different nerves. Several nerves accomplish this purpose, and the occipital nerves (greater and lesser) are some of the most important ones. There are two greater and two lesser occipital nerves, on each side of the head. Emerging from between bones of the spine in the upper neck, the two occipital nerves make their way through muscles at the back of the head and into the scalp, supplying feeling (including pain) to a good portion of the back and top of the head. They sometimes reach nearly as far forward as the forehead, but do not cover the face or the area near the ears; other nerves supply the feeling to these regions. If for any reason these nerves become inflamed you will experience pain down the nerve. Like many other nerves, the greater occipital nerves can be “blocked”- made numb with an injection of medication- to relieve pain.</p>
<p><b><i>Why is it done?</i></b></p>	<p>The greater occipital nerve block is used to treat those patients with one-sided head pain that occurs predominately at the back of the head. Patients with the “nerve-like” shooting, zapping, stinging, or burning pain of occipital neuralgia generally respond best. The procedure also may provide some degree of temporary benefit for patients with migraines, cluster headaches, and a variety of other painful conditions, particularly when the scalp becomes tender, indicating that the nerve is inflamed.</p>
<p><b><i>How is it done?</i></b></p>	<p>You will be asked to lie down on an examination table or sit in a chair. The scalp at the back of the head will be cleaned with alcohol, and your provider will locate the site of the inflamed nerve and painful site. Using a thin needle, a mixture of local anesthetic and steroids are injected into the scalp in the area of the “trunk” of the nerve. If the injection has been properly located, the scalp on the injected side will quickly go numb, often relieving pain within minutes. You will be asked to note how this numbness affects your symptoms. A more permanent procedure on the nerve would be expected to have a similar effect. This numbness will wear off over several hours. If there is a significant amount of inflammation present, the steroids may begin to work in the next few days to help bring your pain under control for longer, sometimes weeks or months.</p>
<p><b><i>What to wear?</i></b></p>	<p>Please wear loose, comfortable clothing and leave all jewelry and other valuables at home.</p>
<p><b><i>How long will it take?</i></b></p>	<p>Please arrive 15 minutes before your appointment time. The procedure lasts about 15.</p>
<p><b><i>Can I drive home from the procedure?</i></b></p>	<p>Yes you can drive.</p>
<p><b><i>Can I eat before?</i></b></p>	<p>Yes we encourage you to eat a normal breakfast and or lunch.</p>
<p><b><i>Can I take my medications?</i></b></p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p><b><i>What are the possible side effects of steroid medication?</i></b></p>	<p>Administration of steroid medication can cause side effects. They include, but not limited to: hyperglycemia (increased blood sugar), sweats, and hot/cold flashes, flushing of the face, hypertension (increased blood pressure), osteoporosis, insomnia, mood swings and Cushing’s Syndrome.</p>
<p><b><i>Risks of this procedure include, but are not limited to:</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 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.</li> <li>* Bleeding, infection and/or bruising in the injection area. Increased pain</li> <li>* A reaction to the local anesthetic, including but not limited to: allergic reaction to the anesthetic medication, loss of consciousness, depressed breathing and cardiac arrest requiring transport to the hospital. .</li> <li>* Nerve damage, paralysis, stroke and even death.</li> </ul>

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**PLEASE SEE THE BACK FOR YOUR INSTRUCTIONS**

**Instructions Regarding Your Procedure**

## GREATER OR LESSER OCCIPITAL NERVE BLOCK

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, <b>AND</b> she will confirm your appointment. We must have a <b>verbal confirmation from you 24-48 hours prior to your procedure</b> . Failure to return our call could result in your procedure being rescheduled.
Where can I obtain more procedure information?	Please visit our website <a href="http://www.nyspineandwellness.com">www.nyspineandwellness.com</a> . It contains demonstrations of some of the procedures we offer. We also have other helpful information.
Can I drive home from the procedure? <i>*the box with a check applies to you</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> You <b>MUST</b> have a ride home, and your driver should remain on site. You must not drive or operate heavy machinery for 24 hours. <input type="checkbox"/> You can drive yourself home.
Can I eat Breakfast or lunch?	Yes, you can eat a light breakfast or light lunch
Should I stop taking aspirin?	If you take ASPIRIN or products containing ASPIRIN <b>for PAIN or HEADACHES</b> , you <b>MUST STOP</b> 7 days prior to procedure. 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?	Yes you may.
Can I take my other medications?	Yes, take your medication as you normally do.
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.
How long will it take?	15 minutes.
What do I bring?	You <b>must</b> bring the following <u>each time</u> you have a procedure: 1. Your current insurance information 2. <b>A written</b> list of all your current medications <b>including the strength and frequency</b> 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.