

## Sympathetic Block (also known as Paravertebral Sympathetic Block)

<b>What is it?</b>	A sympathetic block involves injecting local anesthetic (numbing medication) around the sympathetic nerves in the neck or low back. The sympathetic nerves are located on the front surface of the spinal column (not in the spinal canal with the nerves from the central nervous system). The sympathetic nerves are part of the autonomic (involuntary) nervous system, which controls things people do not have to think about or have direct control over. A fluoroscope (x-ray machine) assists the physician in locating the chain of nerves that supply the affected area.
<b>Why is it done?</b>	Sometimes arm or leg pain is caused by a malfunction of the autonomic nervous system after an injury. The purpose of these injections is to rule out or treat the pain associated with the sympathetic nervous system (complex regional pain syndrome or CRPS, which is also known as reflex sympathetic dystrophy or RSD). A sympathetic nerve block temporarily interrupts nerve impulses in order to reduce or eliminate pain. Depending on the severity of the condition, a series of injections may be required.
<b>How is it done?</b>	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. This may sting for a few seconds. Next, a thin, long needle is placed in the side of the back and advanced to the front of the spinal column under direct fluoroscopy (x-ray). A small amount of dye may be injected to confirm correct location of the needle tip. The x-ray table may need to be tilted to view the location of the needle tip. After placement of one to two needles, a solution of local anesthetic is injected, which will spread up and down the front of the spinal column where the sympathetic nerves are located. After the needle(s) are removed, a small band-aid is applied.
<b>Is there any preparation?</b>	You may choose to receive conscious sedation. Conscious sedation is medication given through an intravenous (IV) catheter (tube) placed in your arm prior to the procedure. The medication will help you relax, but it will not put you to sleep. <b>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 <u>small sip of water</u>. You must have someone available to drive you home after the procedure.</b>
<b>What to wear?</b>	Please wear loose, comfortable clothing and 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 - 30 minutes. You will be in the recovery area about 15 minutes.
<b>Risks of this procedure include, but are not limited to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Pain in the area where the needle(s) was/were inserted. The pain can last for 2 - 3 days. Use ice and mild pain medication such as Motrin, Naprosyn or Tylenol for pain.</li> <li>* A reaction to the contrast 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.</li> <li>* A reaction to the local anesthetic or conscious sedation, including but not limited to: allergic reaction to the anesthetic medication, loss of consciousness, depressed breathing and cardiac arrest.</li> <li>* Temporary numbness or weakness in your arms or legs, depending on the location of the injection: This is normal. You should have assistance with walking and should not drive for 24 hours after the procedure</li> <li>* Bleeding, infection and/or bruising in the area of the injection</li> <li>* Increased pain, nerve damage, stroke, paralysis and even death.</li> </ul>

**Instructions Regarding Your Procedure**  
**SYMPATHETIC PARASYMPATHETIC 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 <b>a verbal confirmation from you 24-48 hours prior to your procedure.</b> Failure to return our call could result in your procedure being rescheduled. The number to call us back is: (315) 703-3480
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?	<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.
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, <b>DO NOT EAT OR DRINK</b> for <b>4</b> hours before your procedure. However, you may take your medicine but only with a <b>small sip of water.</b>
Should I stop taking aspirin?	<b>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).</b>
Can I take the aspirin prescribed for <u>cardiac</u> and or <u>stroke</u> prevention?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, however you need to <u>limit the daily dose to 81 mgs per day</u> for the 7 days prior to the day of the procedure.
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 <b>blood thinners.</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, only with a <b>small sip of water, (you must not take your blood thinner)</b>
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. <b>PLEASE BE ON TIME.</b> <i>*some patients may receive a call to confirm insurance information.</i>
How long will it take?	We ask that you plan <u>1½ -3 hours</u> 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 <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.