

Facet Joint / Medial Branch Block Injection Discharge Instructions

Activity and Diet

- **Activity:** Remain relatively conservative in the things you do today
 - **Diet:** You may resume your normal diet
 - **Medications:** You may resume your normal medication unless otherwise instructed by the Pain Clinic Physician
 - ◆ If your physician has ordered a prescription for you, take the medication as ordered.
Remember: Pain medications require 45 minutes to reach their full affect. Pain medications may also make you dizzy or drowsy. **DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOL OR OPERATE MACHINERY WHILE YOU ARE TAKING PAIN MEDICATION.**
 - **Smoking:** It is strongly recommended that you **refrain from smoking**. Smoking may reverse the effects of the procedure and worsen symptoms.
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- Dressing:** A small Band-Aid has been placed on the injection site - which should be kept dry and removed the next day.
 - Discomfort at injection site:** Try applying ice wrapped in a washcloth for short periods of time (i.e. 20 minutes every 2 hours) during the first 24 hours and then try mild heat.
 - IV Site:** There may be soreness and bruising around the IV site which will go away in a few days. A warm moist cloth put over the area for half-hour periods several times daily will sometimes help. Increased tenderness or red streaking on the area above the needle puncture requires attention and you should call us if this occurs.
 - Reporting of Pain:** It is very important that you keep track of your pain ratings when a facet injection is done. Your pain rating was recorded before the procedure and after the procedure. You will be contacted a couple days after the procedure and will be asked for a specific date and time when your pain returned. Please make sure to write this information down as it is an important part of the whole procedure.
 - Side Effects:** Possible side effects of the steroid medication include facial flushing, insomnia, and occasional low-grade fever. Diabetes may notice an increase in blood sugar levels. These side effects are bothersome in only about 5% of patients and commonly disappear within 1 – 3 days after the injection.
 - Return to Normal:** You may experience numbness and / or relief from your symptoms for up to six hours after the injection. Your usual symptoms may then return and may possibly be worse than usual for a day or two. You should be able to return to work the next day.

OVER

- **Sedation:** Refrain from doing any of the following for at least 24 hours:
 - Operating motor vehicles or dangerous machinery
 - Making any important decisions. (Such as signing important papers)
 - Consuming alcohol, sedatives or stimulants for 24 hours.

- **Report any of the following symptoms to your physician:**
 - numbness in the lower extremity that does not disappear in 24 hours
 - prolonged aggravation of low back pain symptoms.