



PEDIATRIC NERVE BLOCK

**** Please note: This handout is solely intended for the education of patients and their families and does not replace the advice and direction of health care professionals directly responsible for patient care. ****

WHAT IS A NERVE BLOCK?

A nerve block is an injection of local anesthetic near a nerve involved in the transmission of pain. The injection puts the nerve to sleep and stops it from carrying normal sensation and pain signals coming from specific locations in the body.

The goals of the block are to identify the source of the pain (diagnostic) and to reduce the pain so that you get back to your daily activities (therapeutic). A block is also useful in helping you increase your physical activity (including physiotherapy) and decrease the need for medications.

HOW IS THE NERVE BLOCK PERFORMED?

To identify the sources of your pain, doctors may use an ultrasound machine. This is a special scanner that uses sound waves to show images of nerves, bones, and muscles and display them on the screen.

This is how the doctor can precisely locate the injection site and reduce the risk of potential complications. Ultrasound is safe, and it does not cause any pain.



PREPARING FOR THE NERVE BLOCK

Preparing at home:

- Use personal or learned techniques to decrease stress
- Come to the hospital for your COVID test the day before
- Fast according to the directions emailed to you
- Do not wear jewelry or nail polish

When you get to the hospital:

- Go to the 3rd floor, B03.3103 (remember to bring your RAMQ and hospital cards)

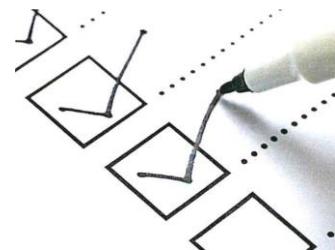
- You will be guided to the waiting room.
- A nurse will call you to start getting ready for the procedure (gown, weight, review of fasting, vital signs and other questions).
- You and your parents will meet with the medical team to confirm details about the block, clarify potential risks and benefits and have all their questions answered.
- You (if 14 years old or older) or your parents will sign the informed consent form.
- You will either sit or lie down on a bed and may receive medication to relax, helping you to feel more comfortable.
- Once ready to start the procedure, a member of the medical team will ask you to walk into the procedure room. Once in the room, you will be asked to lie on the bed and some baseline monitoring will be applied (stickers on the chest)
- You may receive sedation or general anesthesia, as discussed by the medical team. In most cases, you will be asked to breathe in a mask to help you to feel relaxed and sleepy (other options may be discussed with the medical team).

During the procedure:

- Your parents will wait for you in the waiting room

After the procedure:

- Once the block is done, you will wake up in the recovery room and be reunited with your parents
- It is normal to feel sensations such as:
 - Numbness
 - Pinching
 - Warm feeling
 - Soreness at the injection site



After leaving the hospital:

- You must be accompanied by a responsible adult and taken home by car.
- You should pace themselves in their regular activities.
- Pace your return to activities (with help from physiotherapy, if needed).
- Take the prescribed medication (if any).
- Remove the dressing within 24 hours after the injection or if it becomes soiled or wet. You can take a shower the night of the procedure.

- Be careful if applying heat or cold in the first few hours as decreased sensation may cause injury (you may not be able to feel how hot or how cold it is)
- Keep the injected area clean and dry.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS OF THE BLOCK?

More common:

- Transient increase in your baseline pain for the first few days
- Pain at injection site



Less common:

- Increase in pain for more than 2 weeks
- Bruising
- Infection at the injection site (rare)
- Accidental injection of the medication into the bloodstream (very rare)
- Not injecting the correct area (very rare)
- An allergic reaction (extremely rare)

WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT AFTER THE BLOCK?

It is difficult to predict the effects of the block because everyone feels pain differently. In addition, the same type of block repeated over time may not bring the same results.

Generally, there are three scenarios following the block:

- There is no pain until the medication wears off (a few hours or days). The pain comes back stronger, for a short period (usually 2-3 days), and then either decreases or completely goes away.
- There is no pain until the medication wears off, but then the original pain comes back. In this case, the block may be repeated using different technique(s) or medication(s).
- The pain does not go away at all. That means that the source of the pain is not in the nerves or in the zone that has been injected and other treatment(s) will be recommended.

WHEN IS THE NEXT FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT?

- The nurse will call you in the next 7-10 days to find out how you are doing and usually the doctor will see you in 6-8 weeks.

CALL THE COMPLEX PAIN NURSE IF:

- The limb has not recovered strength within 12 hours.
- The pain is not controlled by the medicine prescribed.
- You have any questions about the nerve block or the pain medicines.