

Pain Management - Post Procedure Instructions

ACTIVITY Day of Procedure:

- Avoid strenuous activity, heavy lifting and bending or rotation of the spine. You may resume your regular activities tomorrow as tolerated. Let pain be your guide, careful not to overdo yourself or wear yourself out.
- For the remainder of the day do not:
 - * Drive a motor vehicle or operate heavy machinery
 - * Drink alcohol
 - * Make any important decisions
 - * Perform any activities that require skill, dexterity or coordination
 - * Avoid all independent activities and have assistance available until normal sensation and strength has returned.

DIET:

- You may resume your regular diet as tolerated. If nauseated, hold solid foods until nausea is gone.

CARE INSTRUCTIONS:

- **Injection Site:**
 - * **Bandages** may have been applied after procedure and may be removed at time of discharge. Notify your Physician's office if you notice any excessive drainage or bleeding from the injection site.
 - * **If you have soreness/pain** at the injection site(s), apply an ice pack (20 minutes' on/20 minutes off for today.) Starting tomorrow you may apply ice or heat.
- **Bathing:** You may shower today. Wait 24 hours before sitting in water that covers the injection site (tub baths, hot tubs, and swimming pools).

MEDICATIONS:

- You may resume all home medications today unless otherwise instructed by physician. The medications you received today will not interfere.
- If you are taking blood thinners (example: Coumadin/Warfarin, Plavix/Clopidogrel and Pletal/Cilostazol), restart them tomorrow.
- All requests for pain medication prescriptions or prescription refills must be made to the physician who is currently prescribing you. Contact your Physician's office to request these.

EXPECTED SIDE EFFECTS:

Most procedures performed include a combination of a steroid and local anesthetic medication. These medications will decrease inflammation in your back resulting in decreased pain. The local anesthetic medication works immediately so you may feel some relief right away. The steroid may take up to 10-14 days before you can feel the full effects. If you do not have immediate relief, please remember it may take several days for steroids to begin working. As with all procedures, you may have side effects. The most common side effects that occur are:

- Increased blood sugar. If you are diabetic, check your blood sugar regularly and notify your primary care physician if your levels become too high.
- Increased Blood Pressure. If you monitor home BP, notify your PCP if BP becomes too high.
- You may experience facial flushing from steroid injection, sleeplessness or a restless feeling. These symptoms can last for 1-4 days.
- Numbness in the legs/arms. Call your physician's office if these symptoms last more than 24 hours.
- Short term appetite increase and water retention or swelling.

COMPLICATIONS TO WATCH FOR:

- Fever or temperature greater than 101 degrees. If you feel hot, take your temperature before calling your physician
- Numbness, weakness or tingling in your arms or legs lasting greater than 24 hours.
- Difficulty urinating or holding your urine.
- New or unusual headache and/or neck stiffness.
- Excessive redness, swelling, bleeding or discharge at the injection site.
- Continuous shortness of breath, cough and/or painful breathing
- Persistent nausea or vomiting with inability to tolerate clear liquids for greater than 12 hours.

CALL 911 IF YOU EXPERIENCE:

- Chest Pain
- Severe shortness of breath
- Any medical emergency

For STELLATE GANGLION BLOCK patient only:

You may eat only when your voice is normal. Begin with sips of water and progress to solid food as tolerated. It is normal to experience any of the following symptoms for up to 8 hours after the procedure

- Droopy eyelid
- Nasal Stuffiness
- Hoarse voice
- Sensation of warmth, tingling or weakness in your arm/hand
- Red or blood shot
- Tearing (eyes)
- Sensation of a “lump in your throat”

If you experience any changes in your normal breathing pattern (*shortness of breath or pain when breathing*) or increasing swelling of the neck, go to the closest emergency room immediately. Notify ER staff that you received a “*Stellate Ganglion Block*”.