



COMPLETE CARE PAIN AND PALLIATIVE CENTER

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Post operative instructions following a Medial Branch Block “MBB”

- You have undergone a medial branch block procedure. This procedure is a diagnostic injection to test whether or not the facet joints along the spine are a source of your pain.
- Please complete the 24-hour pain diary that you were given so that we can determine whether or not you had relief of your typical pain during the 4–6 hours following the procedure.
- Your medial branch block may need to be repeated twice to confirm results. We will discuss this option with you in detail based on your specific situation.
- In general, if your typical pain is reduced by >50%, then you are a candidate for a radiofrequency ablation. Radiofrequency ablation is a procedure that heats the medial branch nerves that supply the facet joints. By heating the individual nerves to each joint, you have the potential to experience long-term (6 months–2 years) pain relief in these joints.
- Please remember that your medial branch block is only a test, and your regular pain usually returns within 5-24 hours.
- It is common to experience mild soreness at the injection site(s) for 24–48 hours. Ice is the best remedy. You may apply ice for 20 minutes at a time, several times a day, as needed.
- Avoid heat to the injection area for 72 hours. No hot packs, saunas, or steam rooms during this time. A regular shower is OK.

- You may immediately restart your regular medication regimen, including pain medications, anti-inflammatories, and blood thinners.
- Please remove the sterile dressing or band-aid tonight or tomorrow morning. Do not leave it on after you have taken a shower or gotten it wet.
- Corticosteroid side effects can occur after this injection but usually resolve after several days. These side effects can include flushing, hot flashes, mild palpitations, insomnia, water retention, feeling anxious or restless, or headaches.
- While it is extremely rare to get an infection after joint injections, if you develop any signs of infection, please call the office. These signs include fevers or chills, severe increased pain, redness at the injection site, or any drainage from the injection site. The office will call you the next business day to check up on you, it is important that you answer their phone call. The office will call a total of three times. If there is no response after the third time, the office will send a dismissal letter to your house.
- Remember that the corticosteroid benefit (long-term pain relief) from an injection can take as long as 10 days to occur. You may have a period of slightly increased pain after your injection before the cortisone takes effect.
- You may resume all of your normal daily activities 24 hours after your injection.
- It is OK to restart your exercise or Physical Therapy program as soon as you feel comfortable doing so.
- You should schedule a follow-up visit to review your response to this injection.