

Why have I been recommended a medial branch block?

An **MBB is a diagnostic test** and not intended to provide treatment of pain.

How do I take care of myself at home?

- If the injection site is painful, apply ice or a cold pack over the injection site no more than 15 minutes at a time, about two to three times each day as needed.
- **Do not** take a bath, go swimming, or use a hot tub for the next 24 hours. You may shower any time.
- Remove the bandage on the needle site the day after your procedure or if it becomes wet (i.e., if you take a shower)
- Resume your regular activities. Avoid strenuous activity for 24 hours.

When to get help

Call your family doctor or the pain program if you have:

- significant weakness and /or numbness in your leg(s)
- fever above 38.5°C (101°F)
- redness or swelling at the injection site(s)

If your primary care provider is unavailable, go to the nearest emergency department.

Locations

Royal Jubilee Hospital
Memorial Pavilion 2nd floor
1952 Bay Street, Victoria

Tel: 250-519-1836

Central Island Pain Program
Nanaimo Regional General Hospital 2nd Floor
1200 Dufferin Crescent, Nanaimo

Tel: 250-739-5978



Island Health Pain Program Website:

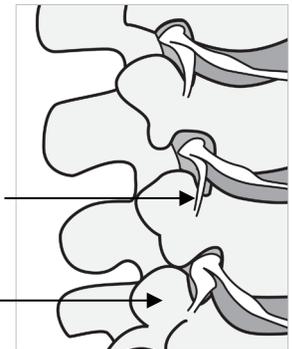


SCAN ME



Medial Branch Block

Pain Management Clinic



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What is a Medial Branch Block?

Medial branch nerves are small nerves connected to facet joints in the spine. The nerves carry danger signals from the facet joints to the brain.

The procedure involves injecting a small amount of anesthetic (similar to dental freezing) near a medial branch nerve to block the danger messages. Usually, multiple medial nerves are injected during the procedure.

This procedure is usually done to see if blocking the danger messages from specific medial nerves relieves a person's pain. If it does, the person could be considered for a procedure called a radiofrequency ablation.

Who completes the procedure?

The physician will explain and complete the medial branch block, which takes about 15 minutes to complete.

Will I be asleep for this procedure?

- No, you are awake during the procedure.
- The physician uses local anesthetic (numbing medication) to treat the targeted area.

Can I bring a relative/friend?

Yes, a relative or friend can stay with you before and after the procedure. However, for safety reasons, they cannot be in the room with you during the procedure.

How do I prepare for this procedure?

- Wear loose comfortable clothing that is easy to remove, if needed.
- You may eat and drink, but restrict your intake to a light meal before your procedure.
- Unless instructed otherwise, **do not** stop taking your regular medications.
- Tell the physician and nurses if you have any allergies, such as the contrast dye used for x-ray procedures or local anesthetics.

Please arrange for a responsible adult to drive or escort you home after the procedure, or else your procedure may be cancelled.

What happens during the procedure?

You lie on your stomach on the x-ray table.

The area to be injected will be cleaned with antiseptic solution (that can be clear or pink in color).

The physician injects local anesthetic (numbing medication) into the area around the nerve.

A small bandage will be placed over the injection site.

What happens after the procedure?

We move you to a recovery area to rest for about 10 minutes. You might feel some heaviness or numbness in your legs. We will check to make sure your muscle function and sensation are normal before you leave.

During this time, we will also assess your level of pain to determine if you are a candidate for a radiofrequency ablation (see radiofrequency ablation pamphlet for more information).

Are there any risks or complications?

There could be soreness or bruising at the injection site. Possible complications such as infection, bleeding, and nerve damage are uncommon.