

How do I care for myself at home?

- **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 24 hours after the procedure or if it becomes wet (i.e., if you take a shower).
- 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.
- You can take an anti-inflammatory such as ibuprofen, or medication that you normally take for pain.
- Resume your regular activities. Avoid strenuous activity for 24 hours.

When to get help

Contact your primary care provider or the pain program if you have:

- redness or swelling at the injection site(s)
- headache that does not go away
- fever above 38.5°C (101°F) accompanied by aches or chills

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

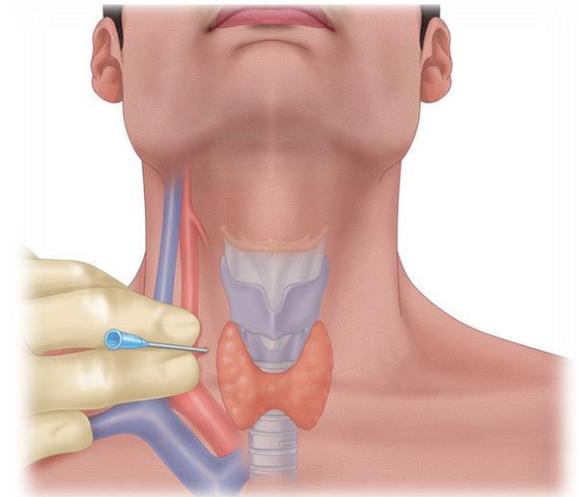


Island Health Pain Program Website:
<https://www.islandhealth.ca/our-services/pain-program-services/pain-program>



Stellate Ganglion Block

Pain Management Clinic



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What is a stellate ganglion block?

The stellate ganglion is a collection of nerves located in your neck, on either side of your voice box.

A stellate ganglion block is an injection of local anesthetic near this group of nerves. The freezing “numbs” the nerves (similar to dental freezing) and blocks danger messages.

Why is a stellate ganglion block done?

Injecting medication into the stellate ganglion nerves can help relieve pain in the head, neck, arm and chest. It also can help increase circulation and blood supply to the arm.

Who completes the procedure?

The physician will explain and complete the stellate ganglion block, which takes about 20 minutes.

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.

How do I prepare for this procedure?

- Wear loose comfortable clothing that is easy to remove, if needed.
- Tell the physician and nurses if you have any allergies, such as the contrast dye used for x-ray procedures or local anesthetics.
- 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.
- **If you take blood thinners (e.g., Warfarin), please tell the physician at least 7 days before your procedure.**
- Plan to take it easy for the rest of the day following your procedure.

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

During the procedure

- You will lie on your back.
- An IV (intravenous) will be inserted into a vein in your arm.
- The skin on your neck is cleaned before you are given the freezing medicine.
- Ultrasound is used to guide the needle to the appropriate location.
- A nurse will check your blood pressure, heart rate, and oxygen.

What happens after the procedure?

We move you to a recovery area to rest for about 20 minutes. You will be asked to drink a glass of water. This helps us make sure you can swallow fluids safely.

What are the risks?

The risk of complications from a stellate ganglion block is very low. However, there could be soreness or bruising at the injection site. Possible complications such as infection, bleeding, and nerve damage are uncommon.

What are the side effects?

After the injection, you may notice:

- Drooping eyelid, constriction of the pupil and/ or a watery red eye
- Flushing (redness) of the face
- Nasal stuffiness
- Hoarse voice
- Feeling a “lump” in your throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Warmth or tingling in your arm or hand

These effects will subside in a few hours.