

Stellate ganglion block



About this leaflet

This leaflet is about having a stellate ganglion block injection in the Pain Clinic or as a day case.

The stellate ganglion is a large collection of nerve cells which control the muscle tone of blood vessels and pain. These nerve cells lie either side of the voice box in your neck. By injecting the side of your neck on the same side as you feel pain, we aim to block the nerves which may be contributing, or involved in the pain you are feeling.

Stellate ganglion injections can be helpful as treatment for some head, neck and upper arm pain.

What happens if I decide to have an injection?

The injection will be given either in the Pain Relief Clinic or as a day case. You will need someone to collect you from the hospital as you should not drive following treatment.

You may be given a sedative injection into a vein in the back of your hand before treatment begins. This helps you to relax. **It is important that you do not have anything to eat for 6 hours before the injection. You may have clear fluids until 2 hours before the injection.**

The stellate ganglion injection is an injection of local anaesthetic to the front of your neck. The doctor has to feel your neck to find the correct place to inject, or may use an ultrasound scanner to aid needle placement.

You may experience a snuffly feeling in your nose and your face and arm may feel warm. Your voice may be husky or occasionally hoarse and your eyelid may be droopy. These symptoms are normal. These effects wear off after a few hours and are not a cause for concern.

What happens afterwards?

A nurse will record your pulse and heart rate over a period of 30 minutes whilst you rest on a couch. Later, after approximately an hour, you may get up and go home, depending on the nurse's assessment.

The sedation, if given, may leave you still drowsy and you will need to rest when you get home. You should take care with hot drinks and do not drive until the next day.

A follow up appointment may be handed to you or sent to you in the post. It may be necessary to repeat the injections over a period of time.

Are there any side effects?

- There may be some bruising at the injection site.
- You may feel a little faint when getting off the couch following your treatment.
- You may have some numbness in your arm on the side of the injection, and hoarseness of your voice.
- Occasionally your pain may be aggravated for a few days until the nerves settle down. Take your normal pain killers.
- You may experience a headache.

These side effects are all short lived.

Very occasionally some of the injection may go into your bloodstream. This will make you feel faint. All care is taken to avoid this and you will be carefully monitored during your treatment.

Contact us

If you have any questions, please ask either the nursing staff or doctor.

Pain relief nurses station: 01872 252095

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690

