

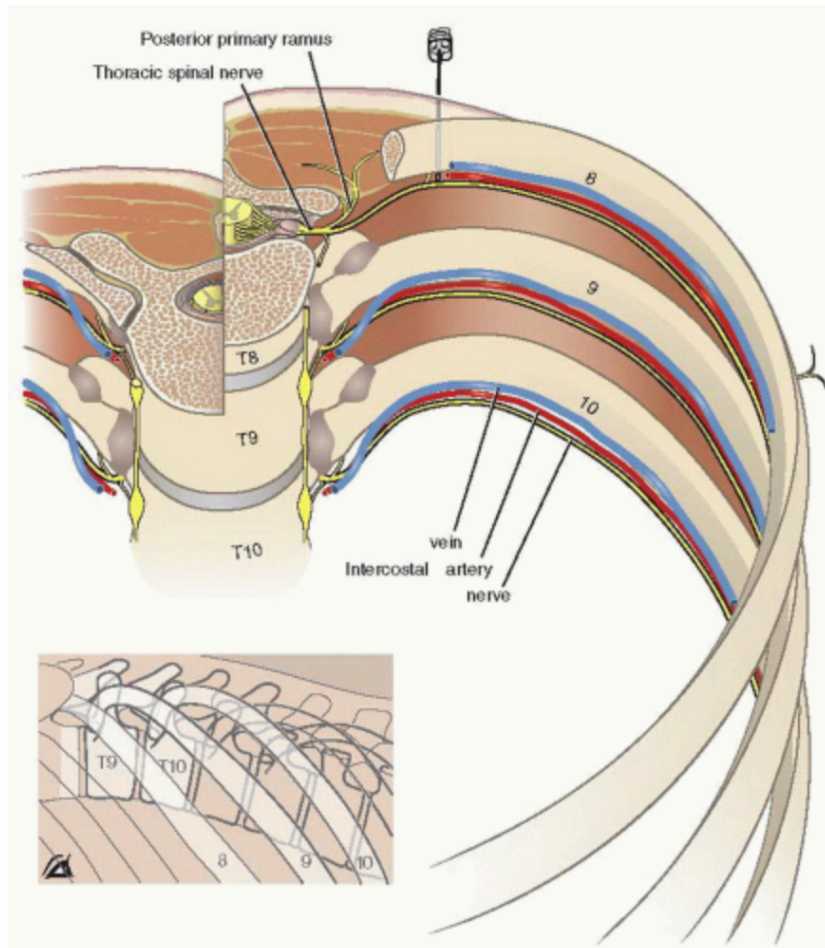


What is an intercostal Nerve Injection or Ablation?

An Intercostal nerve block can be used to numb the nerves that supply the chest wall. These nerves can commonly be damaged and surgical procedures such as lung resection. These nerves can cause pain that radiates from the back to the front as well as pain with light touch. Intercostal injection is to determine if further treatment with a heat source called a radio frequency ablation will be beneficial. The injection is only to diagnose the source of the pain and is very short lasting. The intercostal ablation can lead to several months of pain relief.

Why perform an intercostal nerve block?

An intercostal nerve block is performed in order to get drugs, such as steroids and local anesthetic, as close to the nerves as possible. The intercostal nerve block is also diagnostic to determine if these nerves we'll be treated for longer periods with an ablation. This nerve block and ablation is beneficial when other treatments have failed in the past.



Can anyone have an Intercostal nerve block?

Most people can have an intercostal nerve block. If you have any localized infection, such as a skin infection on the knee, or a generalized infection, the procedure would not be performed until the infection has cleared up.

The procedure is done under X-ray to ensure that the injection is given in the correct place. If you are female and below the age of 55 you will be asked about the date of your last period, and



if it is more than 28 days ago you, will be asked whether you are likely to be pregnant. Although the amount of radiation used is small, there is always a risk to the fetus. Occasionally we may need to ask you to have a pregnancy test.

The procedure cannot be done on anyone who has a problem with their blood clotting. Most commonly this is due to taking blood-thinning medication.

What are the risks and complications?

The most common problems relate to local anesthetic which may be used. Local anesthetic could be injected into a blood vessel which can cause lightheadedness, seizure, numbness around the mouth.

Infection is always a risk whenever anything is injected into the body, and we take precautions to avoid this by performing the procedure as a fully sterile technique. If an infection does get in it can produce the symptoms of feeling unwell, headache, and stiffness of the neck. This can occur quite soon after the injection.

Overall, these complications are extremely rare. However, if you start to suffer from any of these symptoms, you must go and see your doctor or the Emergency Room of your local hospital urgently (do not go to Urgent Care), and inform them that you have had an injection.

Additionally for this procedure there is a risk of pneumothorax. This is because the nerves lie right above the lung. If this should happen you will be monitored and possibly sent to the emergency room if necessary.



How is the procedure performed?

The procedure is performed in the operating room or office under live X-ray. When you arrive a small needle may be inserted into one of your veins, for safety, so that should any drugs be required, they can be easily given. You will be expected to lie on the table face down.

Local anesthetic is injected into the skin and deeper tissues to reduce the discomfort of the procedure. However, when the needle is inserted there will be a feeling of someone pushing in your knee, which is normal. The needle will be inserted in three places in the back. When the operator has put the needle in, X-rays will be taken to confirm that the needle is correctly positioned. When the operator has confirmed that the needle is in the correct place, the injection will be given and the needle removed.

What happens after the procedure?

After the procedure you will go into the recovery area or return to the ward where your blood pressure will be monitored.

As local anesthetic is normally used as part of the injection technique, you will notice some numbness or weakness of your legs. This is only a temporary problem, which will wear off.

The local anesthetic may also affect your ability to pass urine. Therefore you will not be allowed to go home until you have full sensation in your legs.

What pain might you experience after the procedure?

The amount of pain experienced might become worse for a short period of time. If this occurs, it is not dangerous and



should settle over time.

Back at home

You can remove the dressing from the injection site after 24 hours.

Will you be followed up afterwards?

You will be called for follow up to determine how the injection has helped you.

Important information

Please let us know before if you have:

A cold/flu

Fever/chills

A persistent cough

You are taking a course of antibiotics prior to procedure

Or there has been any significant change in your overall health as this may affect your procedure.

Failure to do so may result in your procedure being cancelled on the day.

Medication

Please take all your prescribed medication as normal prior to your procedure unless you have been otherwise advised

Please bring a list of all your current medication when you attend for your procedure



Can I eat before I come in?

If you plan to get sedation for the procedure you should not eat from midnight the night before.

If you have any questions or concerns about this procedure call the office at 480-636-1225.

This handout should not be considered more important than your doctors advice when you spoke to him in the clinic. The information contained in this is generalized and may not pertain to your specific condition.