

How should I prepare for this procedure?

- Speak to the pain specialist about any changes you might need to make in your medications. If you are not sure what to do, ask your family doctor about stopping any of your medications.
- Read the information on 'Procedural Sedation' given to you.
- The doctor will tell you if you need an INR (blood test) before the injection.
- Take all of your other medicines at their regular times.
- Do not eat for 6 hours before your procedure.
- You can drink clear fluids up to 3 hours before the procedure. (Clear fluids: water, clear juices, broth, clear sodas)
- Plan to take it easy for the rest of the day following your procedure.

What are the risks and side effects?

The most common side effects are:

- soreness in your back that can last for a few days
- loose watery bowel movements

Possible risks include:

- misplacement of the needle
- bleeding
- infection
- collapsed lung (pneumothorax)
- puncture of surrounding organs
- puncture of nearby blood vessels
- allergic reaction
- nerve damage or paralysis

Jim Pattison
Outpatient Care and Surgery Centre
9750 140th Street
Surrey, BC V3T 0G9
604-582-4587

www.fraserhealth.ca

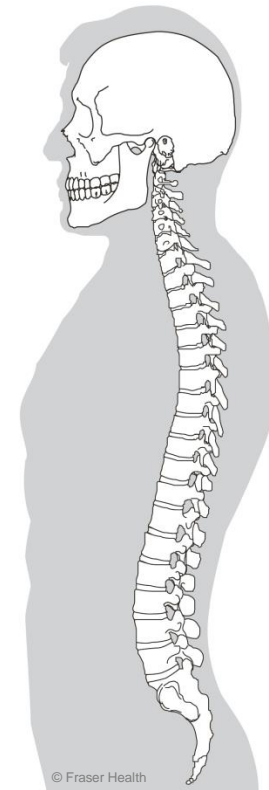
This information does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.

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To order: patienteduc.fraserhealth.ca

Celiac Plexus Block

Pain Management Clinic

Jim Pattison
Outpatient Care and Surgery Centre



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What is a celiac plexus block?

A celiac plexus block is a procedure to control pain caused by cancer in your pancreas or other abdominal organ.

How is it done?

A doctor* injects medicine into the nerves that carry the pain signals from the liver, pancreas, gallbladder, stomach, spleen, kidneys, intestines, adrenal glands, or blood vessels to the brain.

How does the block work?

Your doctor injects a temporary freezing medicine into the nerves.

If the freezing medicine blocks your pain, you return to have either alcohol or phenol injected to destroy the nerves causing your pain.

Your doctor will talk to you about which procedure you will have.

Am I awake for this procedure?

- We give you some medicine to make you feel sleepy.
- You are awake enough to talk to your doctor during the procedure.
- Your doctor freezes your skin with numbing medication.

Before the procedure

- Your doctor will talk with you about the procedure and ask you to sign a consent form.
- Plan on being at the clinic for 2 to 3 hours.

During the procedure

- The procedure takes 1 hour.
- X-ray images are used to guide the procedure.
- A doctor, an x-ray technician, and a nurse are all in the room to take care of you.
- You lie on your front, face down.
- We start an intravenous (I.V.) in one of your arms.
- We give you medicine to make you feel sleepy.
- The skin on your back is cleaned before the freezing medicine goes in.
- A nurse checks your blood pressure, heart rate, and oxygen.

Will it hurt?

- You will feel a pinch and some burning.
- As the needle goes in, you will feel some pressure.
- Your doctor will inject more freezing if you feel pain.

After the procedure

- We move you to our recovery area where you stay for 1 hour.
- You will be asked to wiggle your toes and move your legs.
- You might have low blood pressure.
- Your legs may feel warm and tingly.
- You might notice that your pain is less.

How long will the block last?

- If temporary freezing is used, your pain should be gone for several hours.
- If alcohol or phenol was used, your pain should be gone for 1 to 6 months.
- Your pain will come back over time as your nerves re-grow.
- You may need to have the procedure again.

Who should not have this procedure done?

You should not have this if:

- You are allergic to any of the medicines that are used.
- You did not stop taking your blood-thinning medicine.

*For this pamphlet: When we use 'doctor', we mean either doctor or nurse practitioner