

How do I take care of myself at home?

Needle site care

Remove the bandage on the needle site the day after your procedure.

You can shower. **Do not** take a bath, go swimming, or use hot tub for next 48 hours.

Activity at home

You can return to your daily activities. You might want to rest today.

If the procedure has given you significant relief from your usual pain, talk to your doctor before doing any strenuous physical activities or sports.

When to get help

Contact your doctor or specialist if you have any of the following:

- fever above 38.5°C (101°F), aches, chills
- severe pain not controlled by over-the-counter medicine, your usual pain medicine, or other ways you have managed the pain in the past
- any local pain, swelling, and/or redness around the needle site

HealthLinkBC

8-1-1

Call any time you have any questions or concerns. HealthLinkBC is open 24 hours. Available in 130 languages. For an interpreter, say your language in English. Wait until an interpreter comes on the phone.

Locations

Abbotsford-Regional Hospital Medical Imaging, 2 nd Floor, Fraser Wing 32900 Marshall Road, Abbotsford	604-851-4866
Burnaby Hospital Medical Imaging, 3rd Floor 3935 Kincaid Street, Burnaby	604-434-4211
Lions Gate Hospital Medical Imaging, Lower Level 231 East 15 th Street, North Vancouver	604-984-5775
Mount Saint Joseph Hospital Medical Imaging, Level 1 3080 Prince Edward Street, Vancouver	604-877-8323
Powell River General Hospital Medical Imaging 5000 Joyce Avenue, Powell River	604-485-3282
Richmond Hospital Medical Imaging, Main Floor 7000 Westminster Highway, Richmond	604-278-9711
Royal Columbian Hospital Medical Imaging, Columbia Tower 330 E. Columbia Street, New Westminster	604-520-4640
Sechelt Hospital Medical Imaging 5544 Sunshine Coast Highway, Sechelt	604-885-8608
St. Paul's Hospital Medical Imaging, 2 nd Floor, Providence Building 1081 Burrard Street, Vancouver	604-806-8006
Squamish Hospital Medical Imaging 38140 Behrner Drive, Squamish	604-892-6025
Surrey Memorial Hospital Medical Imaging, 1 st Floor, Lower Level 13750 96 th Avenue, Surrey	604-588-3308
UBC Hospital Medical Imaging, Main Floor 2211 Westbrook Mall, Vancouver	604-822-7076
Vancouver General Hospital Interventional Radiology, Jim Pattison Pavilion Station 4, Ground Floor, 855 West 12 th Avenue, Vancouver	604-875-4111 Ext 68612

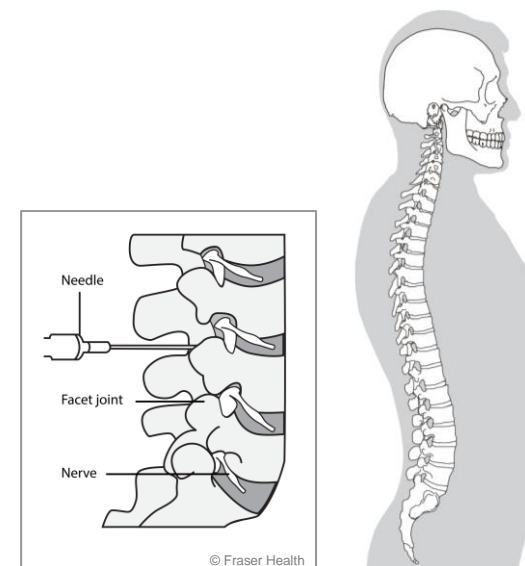
www.fraserhealth.ca ♦ www.vch.ca

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

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Facet Joint Injection



What is a Facet Joint Injection?

This procedure involves injecting a small amount of local anesthetic (similar to dental freezing) and/or steroid medication around a facet joint.

Facet joints are small joints on the sides of bones that make up your spine, called vertebrae. They are what helps your back to bend and twist. Nerves come off your spinal cord through these joints on their way to other parts of your body.

The joints can become painful due to arthritis, a back injury, or mechanical stress to the back. A facet joint injection helps block the pain. Injections can be done anywhere along the spine (cervical or neck, thoracic or upper back, lumbar or low back).

Who does the procedure?

An interventional radiologist does the procedure (a doctor who specializes in image guided procedures using x-ray and fluoroscopy).

If you have questions about the procedure, you can ask the interventional radiologist before your procedure.

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.

What do I need to do to prepare for this?

You will be contacted by the Medical Imaging Department, with specific instructions about how to prepare for this procedure.

What happens during the procedure?

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

The radiologist:

- Injects numbing medicine into the skin where needle will be inserted.
- Guides the needle as close as possible to the nerve causing pain using real-time x-ray (fluoroscopy). It is important to lie as still as possible. Tell us if you have any pain.
- Injects anesthetic and/or steroid medication into the area around the facet joint. You might need to be injected in more than one area.
- Places a small bandage over the area when the procedure is complete.

Will it hurt?

It might sting or burn as the numbing medicine is injected into your skin. As the anesthetic injected around the facet joint(s) takes effect, you should start to feel some relief from your pain.

How long will it take?

The procedure takes about 30 minutes.

What happens after the procedure?

We move you to the recovery area to rest for 30 minutes to 1 hour.

You might feel some heaviness in your legs. We check your muscle function and sensation before you leave.

Are there any risks or complication?

Any time the skin is pierced or cut, there is a chance of infection.

Other possible complications include:

- bruising around the needle site
- increase or worsening of pain for 1 to 2 days after injection
- injury to the nerve

How will this change my pain?

The anesthetic around the joint usually wears off in first 24 hours after the procedure.

Steroid medication usually starts to work within 2 to 7 days. You could have pain relief for several days, up to several months. However, the pain could eventually return, meaning you might need more injections or another type of treatment.

For a few people, this treatment does not change their pain. Talk to your doctor if this happens.