

How do I care for 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 the next day. This includes returning to work.

When to get help

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

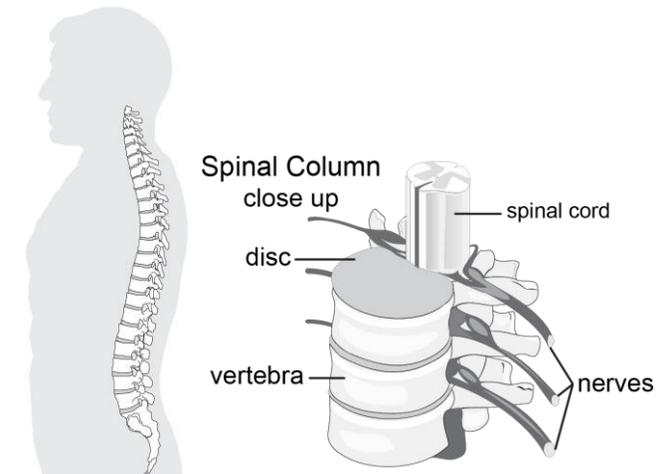
- fever above 38.5°C (101°F)
- flu-like symptoms, such as fever, aches, and chills
- increased pain or redness at the treatment site
- new leg pain, weakness, or numbness
- weakness or dizziness

Locations

Lions Gate Hospital Medical Imaging, Lower Level 231 East 15 th Street, North Vancouver	604-984-5775
Royal Columbian Hospital Medical Imaging, Columbia Tower 330 E. Columbia Street, New Westminster	604-520-4640
Surrey Memorial Hospital Medical Imaging, 1 st Floor, Lower Level 13750 96 th Avenue, Surrey	604-588-3308
Vancouver General Hospital Interventional Radiology, Jim Pattison Pavilion Station 4, Ground Floor, 855 West 12 th Avenue, Vancouver	604-875-4111 Ext 68612



Lumbar Sympathetic Nerve Block



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HealthLinkBC

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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.

www.fraserhealth.ca ♦ www.vch.ca

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

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What is a Lumbar Sympathetic Nerve Block?

The lumbar sympathetic nerves are nerves in your low back that give your brain messages from your lower legs.

This procedure blocks the nerves with local anesthetic. It is done to see if blocking the nerves messages improves blood flow to the legs and eases pain.

The procedure could be done in 1 or 2 visits. During the first visit, we inject a small amount of numbing medicine similar to dental freezing (anesthetic). If you have good results from this, you might return to have the nerve permanently blocked.

Who does this procedure?

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

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

Can I bring a relative or 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.

You must arrange for a responsible adult to drive/escort you home after this procedure.

How long will it take?

Plan to be at the hospital for at least 2 hours. The procedure takes about 1 hour.

What happens before the procedure?

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

If you are having a permanent block, we might start an intravenous and give you some medicine to help you relax.

What happens during the procedure?

You lie face down on the x-ray table.

We might place temperature probes on the bottom of each foot. We check to see how warm your feet are before and after the procedure.

The radiologist:

- Locates the spot where the injection will go.
- Cleans the area with antiseptic.
- Injects numbing medicine to freeze the skin around the area.
- Guides the needle as close as possible to the nerve causing pain using x-ray images. It is important to lie as still as possible. Tell us if you have any pain.
- Injects anesthetic into the area around the nerve.
- 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.

If you have pain or discomfort that is similar to the pain you normally experience, it tells us this is the nerve causing your pain. As the anesthetic around the nerve takes effect, you should start to feel some relief from your pain.

The skin freezing usually wears off in the first 24 hours.

What happens after the procedure?

We move you to the recovery area where we monitor you for about 1 hour. We check the skin temperature and feeling in your feet.

How will I know if it worked?

If your foot gets warmer by 2 to 3 degrees Celsius, we know the block has worked.

Are there any risks or complication?

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

Other possible complications include:

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