

What is the purpose of this procedure?

Nerve roots leave your spinal cord and combine to form the nerves that travel into your arms and legs. They allow you to move your arms and legs. When these nerve roots swell it may cause pain. They may become swollen and painful due to irritation from a damaged disc, bone spur, or arthritis. This block can help determine which nerve is causing your pain. During the procedure, a temporary numbing medicine is placed over the target nerve. If your pain improves following the injection, then that nerve is the one most likely causing your pain.

What are the risks associated with this procedure?

The risks are infrequent. They include:

- Allergic reaction to medication
- Nerve damage (spinal cord and nerve roots)
- Bleeding and bruising at the injection site
- Pain at the injection site or during the injection
- Infection
- Puncture of the sac surrounding the spinal cord (dura mater)
- Injection of medication into a blood vessel or spinal fluid
- No improvement or worsening of your pain in some cases

How should I prepare for the procedure?

- You must have a driver with you at the time of check in and check out. Your driver must accompany you to the clinic for your procedure. You can be discharged only to the care of a responsible adult driver 18 or older.
- Since you may receive sedation, it is important that you do not eat within 6 hours before the procedure. Small amounts of clear liquids are ok up to 2

hours before the procedure. If you have diabetes discuss an eating and medication schedule with your doctor.

- You may need to stop taking certain medications several days before the procedure. Please remind the doctor of all prescription and over-the-counter medications you take, including herbal and vitamin supplements. The doctor will tell you if and when you need to discontinue the medications.
- It is very important to tell the doctor if you have asthma or had an allergic reaction to the injected dye for a previous radiology exam (CT scan, angiogram, etc). An allergic reaction has symptoms such as hives, itchiness, difficulty breathing, or any treatment which required hospital stay.
- Tell the doctor if you develop a cold, fever, or flu symptoms before your scheduled appointment, or if you have started taking antibiotics for an infection.

What will happen during the procedure?

The procedure is performed on an outpatient basis in a special procedure room equipped with a fluoroscope (x-ray). In the pre-procedure area the nurse or doctor will place an IV line. This is used for fluids and sedation.

1. When you get to the procedure room for your safety and comfort you will be connected to monitoring equipment (EKG monitor, blood pressure cuff, and blood oxygen monitoring device), and positioned on your stomach.
2. Your back is cleansed with an antiseptic soap and the doctor injects numbing medicine into your skin. This will cause a burning sensation for a few seconds.
3. The doctor then carefully directs a needle with help of the fluoroscope (x-ray) to the target nerve root. Contrast dye is injected to ensure correct needle placement. The doctor then injects the anesthetic solution.

What should I do after the procedure?

After the procedure you will be taken to the recovery area for about 20 minutes. When you leave the facility, do things that would bring about your usual pain. Be active. This will help us determine if the nerve injected is the one causing your pain.

Temporary numbness and weakness is possible. You should be careful when you first stand up.

We may give you a pain diary. This will help your doctor determine the effectiveness of the injection, and decide how to proceed. Please mail the diary in the envelope provided. If you have not heard from our office within one week of mailing it, please call (734) 615-7246.

If you would like further information including videos of procedures, please visit our website: <http://www.umpain.com/>

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