

Sphenopalatine Ganglion Block (Infrazygomatic Approach)

What is the purpose of this procedure?

The sphenopalatine ganglion block can be useful to treat migraine headache, cluster headaches, and a variety of facial pain conditions. The **sphenopalatine ganglion** is a group of nerve cells located deep in the face behind the nose. Many face and head nerves also pass through this area. Injecting anesthetic (medication that produces loss of feeling) around these nerves can be an effective treatment of headache and facial pain. An Infrazygomatic approach is sometimes used when patients do not respond to the intranasal approach (Sphenocath). It involves an injection just below the cheekbone.

What are the risks associated with this procedure?

The risks are infrequent. They include:

- Fainting
- Dizziness/lightheadedness
- Allergic reaction to medication
- Injection of medication into a blood vessel
- Bleeding and bruising behind the nose and eye
- Damage to surrounding structures including the nose and eye
- No improvement or worsening of 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 will be receiving 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 are a diabetic, be sure to discuss 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 back.
2. Your cheek area is cleansed with an antiseptic soap. Sterile drapes may then be draped over your head.
3. The doctor then feels your cheek and jaw for the correct location, and numbs your skin. This will cause a burning sensation for a few seconds.
4. After the numbing medicine takes effect, the doctor inserts another needle with the assistance of a special x-ray machine called a fluoroscope. The needle is then directed to the correct location.

5. The doctor then injects a contrast dye to ensure the medicine will spread to the correct location. The anesthetic solution is then injected.

What should I do after the procedure?

You will be in the recovery area for approximately 20-30 minutes. Many patients experience immediate pain relief following the injection, however it is possible you will be sore over the injection site. If so, you can apply ice. Your response will be evaluated at your next follow-up visit.

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

Disclaimer: This document contains information and/or instructional materials developed by Michigan Medicine for the typical patient with your condition. It may include links to online content that was not created by Michigan Medicine and for which Michigan Medicine does not assume responsibility. It does not replace medical advice from your health care provider because your experience may differ from that of the typical patient. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about this document, your condition or your treatment plan.

Patient Education by [Michigan Medicine](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License](#). Last Revised: 08/2018