

What is a Celiac Nerve Block?

A celiac plexus block is an injection of local anesthetic into or around the celiac plexus of nerves that surrounds the aorta, the main artery in the abdomen. Normally these nerves control basic nerve functions. In certain conditions, these nerves can carry pain information from the gut or abdominal organ tissues back to the spinal cord and brain.

A celiac plexus block is performed to block the celiac plexus of nerves that go various organs and parts of the abdomen. This may in turn reduce pain in the abdomen. It is done as a part of the treatment of Chronic Pancreatitis and other types of Chronic Abdominal Pain.

The procedure involves inserting a needle through skin and deeper tissues. So, there is some pain involved. However, we may numb the skin and deeper tissues with a local anesthetic using a very thin needle before inserting the actual block needle. IV sedation is usually given for comfort.

The actual injection takes 10 to 30 minutes. It is performed with the patient lying on his or her stomach. The celiac plexus block is performed under sterile technique. The skin on back is cleaned with antiseptic solution and the skin is then numbed with a local anesthetic. CT is used to guide the needle or needles into the proper position along the outside of the spine. Once in position, the physician will inject the medication to the appropriate area. The needle is then removed and a Band Aid is applied. You will need to recover in a bed following the procedure for about 4 to 6 hours.

How do I prepare for the procedure?

No solid food after midnight the day before your procedure. Clear liquids are allowed the morning of the procedure unless told otherwise. This includes: water, tea, broth, popsicles, coffee without cream, 7-up, sprite, apple juice, or white cranberry juice.

Medication Instructions for all Interventional Procedures:

- You must be off your blood thinners for 5 days prior to procedure. These medications include aspirin, Plavix, Coumadin (Warfarin), and Pletal. If you are on any of these medicines, please inform the doctor that prescribed them before stopping them. Please notify your West Cancer Center nurse or doctor if they are not aware you are taking these medicines. If you have any questions regarding your meds, including if they are blood thinners, please call **901-922-6707**.
- Take any additional routine medications the day of the procedure. If you are on insulin ask your doctor about any adjustments that may be needed.

- Your arrival time is 1 ½ hours prior to your procedure. We will need the additional time to do necessary lab tests, start an IV, ask pre-procedural questions and do a nursing assessment.
- Following the procedure you will need to recover in a bed at our facility for 4 to 6 hours before going home.

You will need someone to drive you home. You will not be allowed to drive yourself. If you do not have someone to drive you your test will be rescheduled. You cannot use public transportation.

Discharge Instructions

- Rest at home
- Avoid strenuous activities (avoid stairs, bending down, sitting upright, driving a car, or excessive walking) for a minimum of 24 hours.
- Your legs might be weaker than they feel for up to 8 hours after the injection.
- Keep the bandage/band aid on the site for a day and keep it dry.
- Report immediately if you notice any numbness, tingling, or a cold feeling in the legs. Also report any difficulty urinating or walking to the physician.
- Report a fever above 101 degrees F, redness, swelling, bleeding, or drainage from the site.
- Call 901-683-0055 ext 1050 for any questions or problems.