



Genicular Nerve Block Patient Education

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WHAT IS A GENICULAR NERVE BLOCK?

The genicular nerves are sensory nerves that carry pain signals from the knee joint and joint capsule. Pain from the knee joint can be caused by injury or inflammation. If these joints are blocked or anesthetized (i.e. numbed), they will not be able to transfer the painful sensation to the brain. This is accomplished by targeting the genicular nerves. A genicular nerve block is a diagnostic injection that helps diagnose whether the shoulder joint is the source of pain and if those pain signals are carried by the genicular nerves. This injection is also performed to see if your pain could be relieved by radiofrequency ablation of the nerves.

HOW IS THE PROCEDURE PERFORMED?

The patient lies on his/her back. The skin of the knee is cleansed with antiseptic solution and a sterile field is created. A small amount of anesthetic is used to numb the skin. Under X-ray (fluoroscopy) guidance, small needles are advanced to the targeted genicular nerves around the knee joint. A small amount of contrast dye is injected to ensure accurate needle placement, then local anesthetic is injected. The injection takes about 5-10 minutes to complete.

HOW LONG DOES THE EFFECT LAST?

Pain relief from the local anesthetic typically only lasts a few hours. It is important to note how much pain relief you experience during this time period.

WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP AFTER THE INJECTION?

You will be given a pain log to complete after the procedure and instructions on how to return this information to Dr. Michalik's office. This will help us to measure your response to the injection and determine the next most appropriate step in your care.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND SIDE EFFECTS?

Serious side effects and complications are rare. The most common problem after the injection is having slightly increased pain in the area of the injection for up to a few days. The other potential complications are infection, bleeding and nerve injury. These complications are minimized by using sterile technique and imaging guidance.