



## Sacroiliac Joint Lateral Branch Nerve Block Patient Education

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### WHAT IS A SACROILIAC JOINT LATERAL BRANCH NERVE BLOCK?

Sacroiliac (SI) joints are formed by the connection between the sacrum and the ilium. Dysfunction of these joints can be caused by injury, inflammation, or irritation. The SI joint and/or the supporting ligaments can be painful. If the SI joint is blocked or anesthetized (i.e. numbed), they will not be able to transmit pain signals. Sacroiliac joint lateral branch nerve blocks are diagnostic injections that help diagnose whether the SI joint or supporting ligaments are the source of your pain and if those pain signals are carried by the lateral branch nerves. These injections are 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 stomach. The skin of the low back overlying the sacroiliac joint 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 sacral lateral branch nerves around the SI 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.