# Stellate Ganglion Blocks/ Sympathetic Blocks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is it?</th>
<th>An injection performed to confirm/diagnose (treat) that the sympathetic nervous system is responsible for arm or leg pain. For example, pain caused with reflex sympathetic dystrophy or complex regional pain syndrome.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How is it done?</td>
<td>An I.V. will be started in your hand or arm. A local skin anesthetic is given. A needle is then inserted using fluoroscopy (x-ray) down to the cervical (SGB) or lumbar (LSB) sympathetic nerve chain. Injectate will then be delivered to the region (Local anesthetic and corticosteroid).</td>
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<td>Expected results:</td>
<td>A decrease in, or relief of pain. A specific pain diary needs to be kept for the first 48 hours following the injection.</td>
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<td>How long does it take?</td>
<td>Thirty minutes plus approximately thirty minutes for recovery time. Please take your usual medication with a small sip of water unless otherwise instructed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risks involved:</td>
<td>Risks include increased pain, headache, bleeding, infection, a reaction to any medications used, nerve damage, paraplegia/quadriplegia, or death.</td>
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</table>
| Side effects:            | - Mild back or neck ache lasting a few days  
- Bruising of the skin and tenderness at the injection site  
- Short-term headache, salt retention with temporary weight gain  
- Rare emotional changes: elation, hyperactivity, anger, depression                                                                                                             |

- YOU WILL NEED SOMEONE TO DRIVE YOU TO AND FROM THE SURGICAL CENTER  
- NO FOOD OR DRINK FOR 6-HOURS PRIOR TO THE SCHEDULED TIME OF YOUR INJECTION  
- HOLD ASPIRIN FOR 7 DAYS AND HOLD NSAID’S (Naproxen, Ibuprofen) FOR 3 DAYS PRIOR TO INJECTION.
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- FOR BLOOD THINNERS (Coumadin, Heparin, Plavix) SPEAK TO YOUR DOCTOR FOR SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS.

**Patient Instructions:**

- No driving for the rest of the day.
- Apply ice to the area every 15 minutes as needed.
- Continue exercises and stretches as before and as tolerated by pain.
- Drink extra fluids for the next 24 hours.
- Take pain medication if needed as prescribed.
- Monitor your level of pain or pain relief from the time the injection is completed.
- Guard the affected area if numbness is present.
- Follow up as directed
- **IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS CALL 303-781-2500 OR 303-423-8334**