

# SELECTIVE NERVE BLOCK



## What is a Selective Nerve Block?

A selective nerve block is an injection of a local anesthetic along a specific nerve root. Along the spine, there are several “holes” or “foramina” through which nerve roots emerge. If these foramina are partially closed from bulging disks, bone spurs, or misalignment of vertebrae, the nerve root can also be pinched. In most cases, this causes a shooting or radiating pain along that nerve root. In a selective nerve root block, a small needle is placed in the foramen alongside the nerve root and the medication is injected.

Selective nerve blocks can also be used to diagnose a back problem and determine if a nerve root is the source of pain.

When used to diagnose a condition, a smaller dose of medication is injected into the painful nerve(s). If pain is relieved, then the doctor can confirm a diagnosis and proceed with a treatment plan.

## How is the Procedure Done?

A selective nerve block is typically done with you lying on your stomach for back injections and on your side for neck injections. The skin on the back or neck is cleaned with antiseptic solution and then the injection is carried out. After the injection, you are returned to your room and monitored for 15-20 minutes before you are released with someone to drive you home.

## What to Expect After the Injection

Immediately after the injection, you may feel that your pain may be gone or quite less. This is due to the local anesthetic injected. This will last for a few hours. Your pain may return and you may have a sore back for a day or two. Icing will reduce this. This is due to the mechanical process of needle insertion as well as initial irritation from the steroid itself. You should start noticing pain

relief starting the 3rd to 7th day.

## **In Pain? We Can Help.**

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