

Peripheral Nerve Block Information Sheet

Your surgeon may have recommended a peripheral nerve block for your surgery. This can be completed before or immediately following your procedure and will be performed by a specially trained anesthesiologist.

Why is a Nerve Block Recommended?

- To manage post-operative pain
 - Reduces the amount of pain medication you will need to take, which will help decrease the risk of side effects from those medications
 - Allows for a more comfortable recovery at home
- To reduce the amount of anesthesia required
 - Helps you wake up more quickly
 - Lowers the risk of postoperative nausea and vomiting

What is a Nerve Block?

- An injection of local anesthetic near nerves to numb a specific region of the body
 - Local anesthetic is a numbing medication, like what is used at the dentist's office
- How long the block lasts can vary
- Pain relief usually lasts 12 – 24 hours

What are the risks associated with Nerve Blocks?

- Nerve blocks are considered safe and effective for pain relief from surgery, but all procedures have some risks
- Many precautions are taken to reduce the risk associated with nerve blocks
- An injection of any kind can cause bruising, bleeding, or infection
- Occasionally, numbness can last longer than expected
- Permanent nerve damage is rare

How will it feel to have a Nerve Block?

- Each step of the procedure will be explained to you
- Medications are given before the nerve block procedure to help you relax
- An ultrasound machine is used to locate the appropriate area to ensure proper placement of the numbing medication
- The area of the body that is blocked may feel numb and heavy
- Weakness, inability to move the affected arm or leg, and the feeling as if your arm or leg has “fallen asleep” is normal
- You will be given additional instructions on how to care for yourself prior to being discharged home

An anesthesiologist will answer any questions and have you sign a consent form regarding your block before it is performed (before you go back to surgery).