

## INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR PROCEDURE

### **CERVICAL SELECTIVE NERVE ROOT BLOCK**

#### **H**ow we do the procedure

A cervical selective nerve root block is done to decrease inflammation or irritation of a specific nerve root in the neck. You will be lying face down on the table with several pillows under your chest. Your neck will be cleansed with betadine and a sterile drape will cover the area. We will inject the skin with local anesthetic to make you more comfortable during the procedure. An x-ray (fluoroscopy) machine will be used to guide needle placement. A small needle is inserted alongside the spine and advanced to the level of the specific nerve root to be blocked. Once in position, the area will be injected with IV contrast or dye to be sure the steroid flows to the proper area. A local anesthetic agent and long-acting steroid are injected to bathe the inflamed nerve root and hopefully reduce the inflammation to decrease your pain.

#### **W**hat to expect

With the local anesthetic injection, you may notice a numb area on your neck, shoulder or arm. This will only last a few hours. Rarely, the local anesthetic may cause some muscle weakness, but significant weakness is unusual. A long-acting steroid (NOT the kind that increases muscle size in athletes) is injected as well and this will begin to work in 1-5 days. We will schedule you for another injection in 2 weeks. If you have minimal or no pain 2 days prior to your next injection, call our office and we will change your appointment to a follow-up visit. There is a limit of 3 steroid injections in a 10 month period. If no substantial effects are obtained after one or two injections, we will discuss other alternatives.

#### **R**isks

The risks include bleeding, infection and a reaction to any of the medications used for the procedure. We use sterile technique to avoid infections. If you are taking a "blood thinner" (anticoagulant), we will give you special instructions before the procedure to avoid excess bleeding.

#### **S**afety Precautions

Since your ability to drive may be impaired for a few hours, we ask that you have someone drive you home.

Injected steroids occasionally cause nervousness, difficulty sleeping, a flushed feeling (like hot flashes), an increased appetite, an elevated blood sugar, or a "moon face" (rounded face) for several days. (Steroids are used occasionally for this procedure.)