

Outpatient Discharge Instructions

Pain Management

You have received an injection of a regional anesthetic. It is likely that the effects of this anesthetic are still present when you are discharged home. The regional/local anesthetic provides pain relief, but also prevents your muscles from working at full strength. Please pay attention to the following side effects and post-injection instructions.

Activity: Remain relatively conservative in the things you do today.

Diet: You may resume your normal diet.

Medication: You may resume your normal medication unless otherwise instructed by the Pain Clinic physician. If your physician has ordered a prescription for you take the medication as ordered: New Rx: _____

Remember: Pain medications require 45 minutes to reach their full effect. Pain medications may also make you dizzy or drowsy. **DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOL OR OPERATE MACHINERY WHILE YOU ARE TAKING PAIN MEDICATION.**

Smoking: It is strongly recommended that you refrain from smoking. Smoking may reverse the effects of the procedure and worsen symptoms.

Dressing: A small Band-Aid has been placed on the injection site, which should be kept dry and removed the next day.

Discomfort at injection site: Try applying ice wrapped in a washcloth for short periods of time (i.e. 20 minutes every 2 hours) during the first 24 hours and then try mild heat.

IV Site: There may be soreness and bruising around the IV site which will go away in a few days. A warm, moist cloth put over the area for half hour periods several times daily will sometimes help. Increased tenderness or red streaking on the area above the needle puncture requires attention and you should call if this occurs.

Reporting of Pain: It is very important that you keep track of your pain ratings when a facet injection is done. Your pain rating was recorded before the procedure and after the procedure. You will be contacted a couple days after the procedure and will be asked for a specific date and time when your pain returned. Please make sure to write this information down as it is an important part of the whole procedure.

Side Effects: Possible side effects of the steroid medication include facial flushing, insomnia, and occasional low-grade fever. Diabetics may notice an increase in blood sugar levels. These side effects are bothersome in only about 5% of patients and commonly disappear within 1-3 days after the injection.

Return to Normal: You may experience numbness and/or relief from your symptoms for up to six hours after the injection. Your usual symptoms may then return and may possibly be worse than usual for a day or two. You should be able to return to work the next day.

Report any of the following symptoms to your physician: numbness in the lower extremity that does not disappear in 24 hours, fever or chills, severe tenderness at the injection site, weakness in the arm (for neck procedure) or leg (for back procedure) that persists the next day after the procedure, inability to urinate or new incontinence of bowel or bladder, breathing difficulty, dizziness, severe total body rash, facial or tongue swelling, chest pain, prolonged aggravation of low back pain symptoms.

- **If you have specific questions regarding your discharge instructions contact Southern New Mexico Surgery Center between the hours of 8 am – 5 pm Monday-Thursday at (575) 437-0890 and ask to speak to a nurse.**
- **If you have questions or problems with your prescriptions or surgical procedure please call the physician office at (575) 434-0639.**
- **After hour care is handled by the physician office at (575) 434-0639. One of our doctors is on call 24 hours a day. If you have an emergency or need immediate medical treatment go to the emergency room or call 911.**

New Mexico Bone & Joint Institute will contact you within four days to reschedule you for an additional procedure, if required, or a follow up appointment with your physician. If you have not been contacted by New Mexico Bone & Joint Institute within four days please call (575) 551-5009.

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