

# Having a nerve root block

Information for patients



## **What is a nerve root block?**

This is an injection of steroid and local anaesthetic into the area around the nerves in your lower back to try to relieve your pain.

## **What does it involve?**

The examination is performed with you lying on your tummy on the x-ray table. Your back will be cleaned and a local anaesthetic may be used to numb the area. X-rays are used to guide the needle to the correct position and x-ray dye is used to confirm the position before injecting the medicines.

## **Who performs the examination?**

It is performed by a team of healthcare professionals which may include a radiographer, an advanced practitioner, an assistant and a radiologist.

## **How do I prepare for the examination?**

**If you are on Warfarin or any blood thinning medication, please contact us on: 0113 392 3768.** Do not stop taking other medication.

You may continue to eat and drink.

## In the Radiology Department

You will be given a gown to change into. Please do not bring large sums of money or items of value with you.

### How long will I be in the department?

Allow one hour for your visit. The examination usually takes 30 minutes. Although we try to keep to your appointment time, there may be a delay due to emergency patients.

We are unable to provide any childcare so please make alternative arrangements.

### Are there any risks?

#### Radiation

This examination involves x-rays. Patients who are, or might be pregnant **must** inform a member of staff.

The amount of radiation used is more than an ordinary x-ray of the chest or body and is equal to the natural radiation we receive from the atmosphere over a period of approximately two years.

The risk from this radiation dose is very low.

#### Allergic reaction

Some patients may be allergic to the x-ray dye or medicines. This is very rare. If you have any allergies, please tell a member of staff.

Despite these small risks your doctor believes it is beneficial for you to have this examination.

## Do you ever fail to complete the examination?

This examination is usually successful. If, for any reason, we are unable to perform the examination we will inform your doctor who will discuss the alternatives with you.

## Following the examination

Your legs may feel numb after the procedure due to the local anaesthetic injection. We strongly advise that you do not drive for at least 12 hours following this examination.

## Are there any side effects?

Your symptoms may feel worse after the examination. It can take up to a week for there to be any improvement in your symptoms. You may take pain relief medication.

## How will I get my results?

You will not be given your results on the day. The results will be sent to your hospital consultant and they will contact you.



## What did you think of your care?

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