

**Single Injection**  
**Peripheral Nerve Blocks**



To contact the  
Regional  
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Service call the  
operator at:  
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(BLOCK)

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## What is a Nerve Block?

A nerve block is an injection of local anesthetic (numbing medicine) near specific nerves to decrease pain during and after surgery. The nerve block is usually performed before surgery, but can be done after surgery as well. The nerve block is sometimes used for the anesthesia, but most often it is meant to facilitate your recovery as an addition to a general anesthetic.

## What type of block did I have today?

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### Single Injection Nerve Block

A single injection block is a one – time injection of numbing medication around the nerve. The duration of the block depends on the type of medication used. It should relieve some of the pain induced by surgery. The block isn't guaranteed to take away all of the pain. If you feel discomfort it is okay to take pain medication after receiving a single injection nerve block. It will wear off eventually. You will need to transition to oral pain medications **BEFORE** the nerve block resolves.

### Lower Extremity Nerve Blocks (hip, thigh, knee, ankle, foot)

Surgery of the lower extremity may require one or more blocks. Depending on the area that is blocked, your entire leg may be numb after surgery. You may have weakness in your leg until the numbness wears off. For surgeries of the ankle, foot or toes, the numbness will be below the knee. You will not be able to walk without crutches or assistance until the numbness wears off. You will be at an increased risk of falling.

### Upper Extremity Nerve Blocks (shoulder, arm, wrist, hand)

There are several upper extremity nerve blocks, which can be performed. The bundle of nerves, located on the side of your neck, and travel to the arm are numbed which causes a temporary loss of sensation and ability to move the extremity. Ultimately helping with pain.

It is normal for part of the arm or the entire arm to be numb. You may not be able to move your fingers until the numbness begins to wear off. If you had an Interscalene block it is common to have a slightly droopy face, large pupil and some difficulty taking deep breaths. These symptoms will go away when the block wears off. They are temporary.

## Things to watch for & call about

- A member of our team will follow up with you tomorrow.

- Numbness of the limb is normal and can last between 3- 24 hours depending on the medication used.
- Use caution with the numb limb. Wear sling, brace and use crutches as directed. A numb leg or arm will put you at a higher risk of falling. Ask for help at home.
- Do not lie on anything hard or sharp.
- If you are having discomfort it is okay to take pain medication by mouth as directed by your surgeon.
- If you feel the nerve block is beginning to wear, off take your oral pain medication. If it has not worn off before going to bed it can be a good idea to take your pain medication before to prevent pain in the middle of the night
- If you have new numbness or the block hasn't worn off after 24 -36 hours please let us know.
- **If you have numbness around the mouth, ringing in the ears, metallic taste, seizures, or dizziness please call 911 or go to your closest Emergency Department.**