

# Lumbar Sympathetic Block



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Sympathetic nerves transmit pain impulses to the brain. A Lumbar Sympathetic Block is carried out to eliminate pain in the lower extremities caused by complex regional pain syndrome, which can arise as a result of joint or limb damage. Generally, a series of these injections is required. During the Lumbar Sympathetic Block, the patient lies on the side or stomach on a table, equipped with a special fluoroscopic machine.

A local anesthetic is administered to numb the skin and all tissue up to the sympathetic nerve through which the needle is introduced. A contrast substance helps to visualize the local picture on the fluoroscope and guide the needle into the painful area. The physician then injects a mixture of anesthetic, saline and anti-inflammatory drug which aids in disrupting the conduction of pain signals to the brain. The patient may feel weakness in the legs, which may last several hours post-procedure. A repeat block may be necessary to achieve full pain relief.

Please notify your provider if you are taking blood thinning agents, if you have inflammation at the site of sympathetic nerve injections or if you may be pregnant.

## Lumbar Sympathetic Block Side Effects:

Possible side-effects are comparable with side-effects of a simple injection: patient may have allergic reactions, bacterial infection or bleeding, which occurs rarely. Steroid side-effects include swelling of the face, arms and legs; diabetics may experience an increase in their blood sugar level.

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**DISCLAIMER:** INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS SHEET IS GENERAL IN CONTENT AND SHOULD NOT BE SEEN AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL ADVICE. CONCERNS OVER MEDICAL CONDITIONS SHOULD BE DISCUSSED WITH YOUR PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN OR PAIN CARE SPECIALIST.