

PH: 630-372-1100
FAX: 630-372-6230



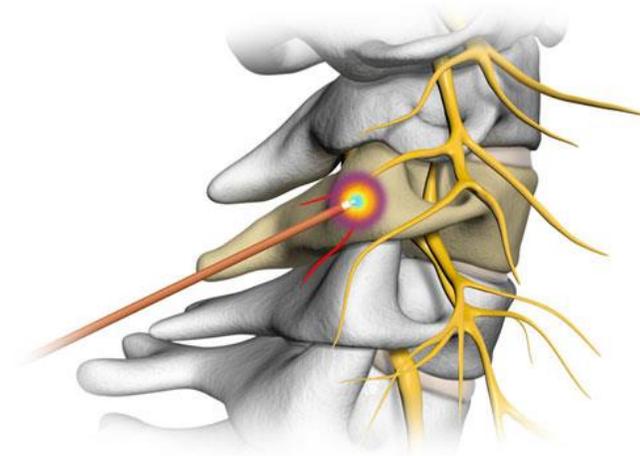
www.suburbanortho.com

1600 Randall Rd, Ste 110
ELGIN, IL 60123

Eberle Building
800 Biesterfield Rd, Ste 565
ELK GROVE, IL 60007

Patient: /LName, /FName /MI DOB: /DOB DATE: /Today

Cervical Medial Branch Radiofrequency Neurotomy



Description

Cervical medial branch radiofrequency neurotomy (a.k.a. radiofrequency ablation) is a procedure used to treat your neck pain and/or headache that is originating from small nerves that act as pain receptors to the joints in your neck (called facet joints). This procedure deadens those nerves, so that they are no longer causing pain. Since more than one of these nerves may be contributing to pain, usually multiple nerves are addressed at one time, so it is less likely that the painful nerves are missed. The procedure can only be performed on your right or left-side at one time, not both at one time.

How it is performed

You will be lying on your side for the procedure. After the skin along the injection site is well cleansed, up to 4 needles will be placed into the side of your neck. A test probe is inserted through the needles to which gives a small electrical impulse to the muscles. This is done as a precaution to make sure the needles are not too close to the larger nerves that travel down your arms. You will be awake during this portion of the procedure so that you can accurately respond whether you or not you feel a twitching sensation down your arm.

After it is confirmed that the needles are in the correct position, then an anesthetic (numbing agent) is injected to the area. The radiofrequency needles are then inserted into the same area. The tips of these needles then heat up to a high temperature for 90 seconds. This creates a heat lesion in the tissue which deadens the nerves, thereby eliminating the pain generating from them.

Potential Benefits

Success rates vary, but typically about 30% to 50% of patients undergoing this procedure for neck pain will experience significant pain relief for as much as two years. Of the remaining neck pain patients, about 50% will get some pain relief for a shorter period. Some patients do not experience any relief from pain as a result of this procedure. As a general rule, if effective, the ablation will often provide pain relief lasting at least 6 months, but can last up to 18 months or longer in some patients. After this period of time, however, the nerve will regenerate and the pain may return. If necessary, the procedure can be repeated on the same nerves if at least 6 months have passed since they were last treated with radiofrequency neurotomy.

Potential Risks

Fortunately, the risks of this procedure are much lower than the risks of surgery. The treated area will normally feel sore for 3-14 days following the procedure. The amount of pain increase can vary from patient to patient, and can be difficult to predict. For most patients this pain is not severe. However, in 5% of patients, the pain is quite troublesome and will last for several weeks. On occasion, patients might develop a superficial burning pain with hypersensitivity, similar to a sunburn feeling, over the treated area that lasts for 1 - 2 weeks. Following this superficial pain, some patients might also experience a light numbness of the skin over the same area. There is also the risk that that procedure does not provide any significant pain relief, even though the previous numbing injections to the same nerves gave significant temporary pain relief.

Potential complications can include, but are not limited to, problematic bleeding, infection, permanent nerve pain, or damaging of larger nerves that radiate down the arms. However, these complications rarely occur.

What to expect after the procedure

After the injection is completed, you will wait in the recovery room for at least 10 minutes if you did not receive IV sedation for the procedure, or at least 30 minutes if you received IV sedation. When preparing to leave from the facility, you will be given a written sheet containing more detailed discharge instructions. You should schedule an office follow up appointment for 3 weeks after the procedure.

Please contact our office at 630-372-1100 if you have any additional questions or concerns.