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PEDIATRIC NERVE BLOCK

**** Please note: This handout is solely intended for the education of patients and their families and does not replace the advice and direction of health care professionals directly responsible for patient care. ****

WHAT IS A NERVE BLOCK?

A nerve block is an injection of local anesthetic near a nerve involved in the transmission of pain. The injection puts the nerve to sleep and stops it from carrying normal sensation and pain signals coming from specific locations in the body.

The goals of the block are to identify the source of the pain (diagnostic) and to reduce the pain so that you get back to your daily activities (therapeutic). A block is also useful in helping you increase your physical activity (including physiotherapy) and decrease the need for medication(s).

For a detailed explanation of the Nerve Block Procedure, please refer to the Nerve Block Booklet (also found on the following webpage: <https://complex-pain.org/preparing-for-a-nerve-block/>)

PREPARING FOR THE NERVE BLOCK AT HOME

Preparing at home:

- Use personal or learned techniques to decrease stress – here are some resources:
 - [Respirelax](#)
 - [Petit Bambou](#) (in French)
 - [Meg Foundation](#)
 - [WebMap Mobile](#)
 - [Boîte à outils pour le stress et l'anxiété — Le Pouls](#) (in French)
- Come to the hospital for your COVID test 24-48 hours before the planned nerve block
- Fast according to the directions emailed to you
- Do not wear jewelry or nail polish

When you get to the hospital:

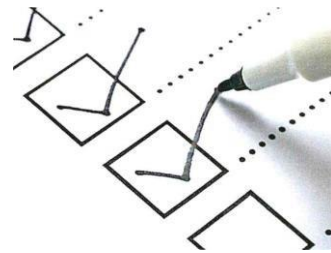
- Go to the 3rd floor, B03.3103 (remember to bring your RAMQ and hospital cards).
- Follow all the directions in the Nerve Block Booklet (click on: https://complex-pain.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/ENG_my_nerve_block_-_photo_tour_FINAL_2023-01-05-avec-compression.pdf).

FOLLOWING THE NERVE BLOCK

After the procedure:

It is normal to feel sensations such as:

- Numbness
- Pinching
- Warm feeling
- Soreness at the injection site



After leaving the hospital:

- You must be accompanied by a responsible adult and taken home by car.
- You should pace yourselves in your regular activities.
- Pace your return to activities (with help from physiotherapy, if needed).
- Take the prescribed medication (if any).
- Keep the injected area clean and dry.
- Remove the dressing within 24 hours after the injection or if it becomes soiled or wet.
- You can take a shower the night of the procedure.
- Be careful if applying heat or cold in the first few hours as decreased sensation may cause injury (you may not be able to feel how hot or how cold it is)

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS OF THE BLOCK?

More common:

- Transient increase in your baseline pain for the first few days
- Pain at injection site

Less common:

- Increase in pain for more than 2 weeks
- Bruising
- Infection at the injection site (rare)
- Accidental injection of the medication into the bloodstream (very rare)
- Not injecting the correct area (very rare)
- An allergic reaction (extremely rare)



WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT AFTER THE BLOCK?

It is difficult to predict the effects of the block because everyone feels pain differently. In addition, the same type of block repeated over time may not bring the same results.

Generally, there are three scenarios following the block:

- There is no pain until the medication wears off (a few hours or until the next day). The pain comes back stronger, for a short period (usually 2-3 days), and then either decreases or completely goes away for a period of time. This is considered a positive block and can be repeated if the pain comes back.
- There is no pain until the medication wears off, but then the original pain comes back. In this case, the block may be repeated using different technique(s) or medication(s).
- The pain does not go away at all. That means that the source of the pain is not in the nerves or in the zone that has been injected and other treatment(s) will be recommended.

WHEN IS THE NEXT FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT?

- The nurse will call you in the next 7-10 days to find out how you are doing and usually the doctor will see you in 6-8 weeks.

CALL THE COMPLEX PAIN NURSE IF:

- The limb has not recovered strength within 12 hours.
- The pain is not controlled by the medicine prescribed.
- You have any adverse effects to the pain medicine prescribed.
- You have any questions about the nerve block or the pain medicines.