

Facet Joint Block or Denervation 脊椎關節注射

Introduction

Facet joints are joints that connect adjacent vertebrae to form the vertebral column. Like other joints, they can wear out over time or due to trauma. This can cause back pain in some cases. Facet joint block is a procedure that may relieve chronic neck or back pain from facet joint disease.

How does Facet Joint Block or Denervation work?

There are different methods of facet joint block:

1. Injection of steroid into or around the joint may reduce the inflammatory process in the joint.
2. Injection of local anaesthetic agent to block the pain signal.
3. Destroying the innervating nerves to the facet joints by heating or freezing them to block the pain signal. This method usually last longer than injecting with local anaesthetic.
4. Injection of dextrose to stimulate inflammation and facilitates healing of tissues.

The Procedure

1. You may be asked to fast for a period of time before the procedure.
2. The procedure is usually performed under local anaesthesia. Sometimes a sedative agent may be administered.
3. An intravenous cannula is first inserted into your vein.
4. You will be asked to lie on your front on the operating table.
5. The procedure site is first disinfected, then local anaesthetic may be because for diagnostic MBB, SC LA should not be given to prevent false positive result injected into the skin.
6. The needle is then inserted on your back/thorax/neck under ultrasound or x-ray guidance.
7. You are requested to lie as still as possible during the insertion of needle to minimize the risk of complication.
8. X-ray contrast may be injected to confirm correct placement of the needle.
9. Local anesthetic and steroid is then injected into the joint or LA +/- steroid or dextrose injected to nerve supplying the nerve). Alternatively, the innervating nerves are destroyed by heating or freezing.
10. Depending on the extent of the pain and how many facet joints are involved, more than one injection may be performed.

Side effects and Complications

There are potential side effects and complications, which in most cases are uncommon and may not be serious.

1. There is usually some pain during and after the procedure.
2. On rare occasion, trauma to the nerve root or spinal cord during the insertion of needle may occur. Rarely this may lead to leg weakness and paraplegia.
3. There is also an extremely small risk of convulsion, hypotension and respiratory arrest when local anaesthetic is used for facet joint block in the neck.
4. Bacterial infection due to the procedure is rare as the puncture site has been disinfected before the procedure.

Remarks

This is general information only and the list of complications is not exhaustive. Other unforeseen complications may occasionally occur. In special patient groups, the actual risk may be different. For further information, please contact your doctor.