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A12lite Peripheral Nerve Block (Lower Limb)

Expires end of December 2019

A more detailed version of this procedure specific information sheet is available. Please ask your health practitioner at any Western Australian public hospital for a copy.

Write questions or notes here:

This document will give you information about a peripheral nerve block to your leg (lower limb). If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is a peripheral nerve block?

A peripheral nerve block is a type of regional anaesthetic that involves injecting local anaesthetics and other painkillers near the major nerves to your leg. A nerve block works by temporarily numbing your nerves to give pain relief.

A nerve block for your leg can be used on its own while you are awake, with sedation, or with a spinal anaesthetic or general anaesthetic.

Operations on lower limbs are usually performed under a general anaesthetic or spinal anaesthetic. A nerve block is usually used in addition to give pain relief afterwards. Depending on the operation, the injection may be given behind your thigh or knee, in your ankle or foot, or near your groin (see figure 1).

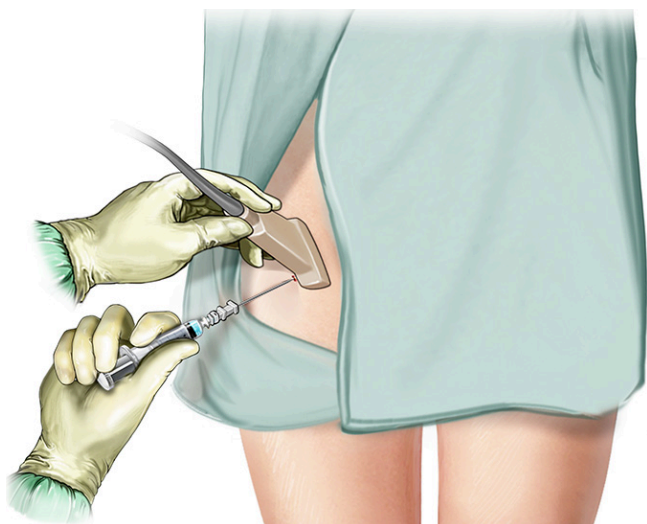


Figure 1

A peripheral nerve block

What does the procedure involve?

Your anaesthetist will usually use an ultrasound scanner and nerve stimulator to help guide them where to inject the anaesthetic.

Your anaesthetist will insert the needle and when they are certain that it is in the right position they will inject anaesthetic through it. Sometimes your anaesthetist may insert a small tube through the needle before they remove it, leaving the tube in place so they can inject more anaesthetic.

What complications can happen?

- Failure of the nerve block

- Allergic reaction
- Bleeding
- Nerve damage
- Local anaesthetic toxicity

Summary

A peripheral lower limb nerve block can be used for most people, usually giving a safe and effective form of pain relief both during and after the operation.

Acknowledgements

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