



Intercostal Block

<i>What is it?</i>	An intercostal block is an injection made under one or more rib(s) to relieve pain. A fluoroscope (x-ray machine) assists the physician in locating the nerve roots that are thought to be inflamed and contributing to the pain.
<i>Why is it done?</i>	This procedure is performed to relieve rib pain that results from a broken rib, costochondritis (inflammation of cartilage surrounding the rib), nerve damage (as in shingles), or a surgical incision (thoracotomy).
<i>How is it done?</i>	A small needle is placed under the affected rib or group of ribs. When the needle placement has been confirmed by fluoroscopy (x-ray machine), a solution of local anesthetic (numbing medication) and cortisone derivative (anti-inflammatory medication) is injected through the needle. A small band aid is then applied.
<i>Is there any preparation?</i>	You may choose to receive conscious sedation. Conscious sedation is medication given through an intravenous (IV) catheter (tube) in a vein in your arm. The medication will help you relax, but it will not put you to sleep. If you opt to have conscious sedation, you MUST NOT EAT OR DRINK for 4 hours before your procedure. You may, however, take your medication with a small sip of water.
<i>What to wear?</i>	Please wear loose, comfortable clothing. Please leave all jewelry and other valuables at home.
<i>How long does it take?</i>	We ask that you arrive 30 - 45 minutes before the scheduled time of your procedure. The procedure lasts about 15 - 30 minutes. You will be in the recovery area about 15 minutes.
<i>Risks</i>	The risks of this procedure include , but are not limited to : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Pain in the area where the needle(s) was inserted. The pain can last for two to three days and be treated by using ice and mild analgesics (pain medication) such as Motrin, Naprosyn or Tylenol. * A reaction to the local anesthetic or dye. These reactions usually do not require further treatment. * If several ribs are blocked, you may experience a sensation of shortness of breath. Please bring this to the attention of the physician and/or staff immediately. * Punctured lung resulting in lung collapse (pneumothorax). This may require hospitalization and insertion of a chest tube. * Bleeding in the injection area. * Infection in the injection area. * Increased pain * Nerve damage, paralysis, stroke and even death.