



## Interscalene Brachial Plexus Block / Axillary

<b>What is it?</b>	The interscalene block is an injection numbing the brachial plexus at the level of the nerve roots. The brachial plexus is a collection of nerves located in the neck and axilla (armpit), supplying the chest, shoulder and arm.
<b>Why is it done?</b>	This procedure is done to reduce pain in your shoulder and upper arm from prior shoulder surgery, injury or complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS) or reflex sympathetic dystrophy (RSD). It may also allow the physical therapist to manipulate the arm more effectively. Your doctor will tell you if he wants you to have physical therapy on the day of the procedure, after the procedure is finished.
<b>How is it done?</b>	Prior to the start of the procedure an intravenous (IV) catheter (tube) is placed in your vein. When you are in the procedure room, you will be asked to lie on your back on a cushioned x-ray table. With an interscalene block your arms will be at your side, with your head turned away from the side to be injected. The doctor may have a nurse pull downward on your involved arm to facilitate the palpation of the landmarks. With an axillary block, the involved arm is positioned to allow visualization and palpation of the axilla (armpit). A small needle is used to inject a local anesthetic (numbing medication) to numb the skin, this may sting a little. Next, a small needle is placed; a nerve stimulator with a special insulated needle may be used to confirm the correct placement of the needle. Then sterile tubing is attached to the needle and anesthetic (numbing) medication is slowly injected through the tubing. The needle and tubing are removed and a small band aid is applied.
<b>Is there any preparation?</b>	You may receive conscious sedation. Conscious sedation is medication given through an intravenous (IV) catheter (tube) 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 <b>MUST NOT EAT OR DRINK</b> for <b>4</b> hours before your procedure. You may, however, take your medication with a <u>small sip of water</u> .
<b>What to wear?</b>	Please wear loose, comfortable clothing. Please leave all jewelry and other valuables at home.
<b>How long does it take?</b>	We ask that you arrive 30-45 minutes before the scheduled time of your procedure. The procedure lasts about 15 to 30 minutes, and you will be in the recovery area about 15 minutes.
<b>Risks</b>	<p>The risks of this procedure include , but are not limited to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Do not come in contact with extremely hot or cold items because you will not be able to protect your arm from injuries due to temperature extremes. Wear a sling while your arm is numb to protect over extension of your shoulder or elbow.</li> <li>*Temporary hoarseness of your voice and and/or inability to completely open your eye on the side of the injection. This should end in 4 to 6 hours.</li> <li>*Pain in the area where the needle(s) was inserted, this can last for two to three days. This can be treated by using ice and mild analgesics (pain medication) such as Motrin, Naprosyn or Tylenol.</li> <li>* Seizure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Temporary numbness or weakness in your arm. This is normal. You should not drive for 24 hours.</li> </ul> </li> <li>* Bleeding in the injection area.</li> <li>* Infection in the injection area.</li> <li>* Increased pain</li> <li>* Nerve damage, paralysis, stroke and even death.</li> </ul>