

# Sacroiliac Joint Block

A Sacroiliac Joint Block is an injection procedure used to diagnose and treat low back pain associated with injury or disease to the sacroiliac joint. The sacroiliac joints are located in the area of the low back and buttocks where the pelvis joins with the spine. Injury and disease to these joints will cause pain in the low back, buttocks, abdomen, groin, and legs. The medicine injected reduces inflammation and swelling inside the joint space. This may in turn reduce the pain.

## Procedure Overview

The Sacroiliac Joint Block is an outpatient procedure, usually done in the Operating Room or a Special Procedure Room. For your safety and comfort, you will be connected to monitoring equipment (EKG monitor, blood pressure cuff, and a blood-oxygen monitoring device), and positioned on your stomach. The doctor or nurse may start an intravenous line and give some medicine to help you relax. Your back is cleansed with an antiseptic soap after which the doctor injects numbing medicine deep into your skin and tissue. This will cause a burning sensation for a few seconds. After the numbing medicine takes effect, the doctor will insert another needle and, with the assistance of a special X-ray machine called a fluoroscope, inject a radiopaque dye (contrast solution) to ensure the needle is in proper position. With the needle in position, a small mixture of numbing medicine (anesthetic) and anti-inflammatory medicine (steroid) is injected. Immediately after the procedure, you will get up, walk around, and try to imitate something that would normally bring about your usual pain. We ask that you to remain at the Clinic until the doctor feels you are ready to leave.

## Procedure Details

Will you be asleep for the procedure? It is not necessary for you to go to sleep for this procedure; however, you will receive enough medication to keep you comfortable. How long will the procedure take? Normally, a sacroiliac joint block procedure takes no more than 30 minutes.

## Before the procedure

Since you will be receiving medication it is recommended that you do not eat within eight hours before the procedure. If you are a diabetic, be sure to discuss your eating and medication schedule with the doctor. You may need to stop taking certain medications several days before the procedure. Please remind the doctor of all prescription and over-the-counter medications you take, including herbal and vitamin supplements. The doctor will tell you if and when you need to discontinue the medications.

## **After the procedure**

You may experience some weakness and/or numbness in your legs a few hours after the procedure. If so, do not engage in any activities that require lifting, balance and coordination. Drink plenty of clear liquids after the procedure to help remove the dye from the kidneys. Do not drive for the remainder of the day. Please have an adult drive you home or accompany you in a taxi or other public transportation. Depending on how you feel, you may resume normal activities and return to work the following day. If the doctor prescribes physical therapy, it is very important that you continue with the physical therapy program. Although you may feel much better immediately after the injection (due to the numbing medicine), there is a possibility your pain may return within a few hours. It may take a few days for the steroid medication to start working.

## **Procedure Risks**

The risks, although infrequent, include: Allergic reaction to the medication; Bruising at the injection site; Infection at the injection site.