

**Patient  
Information**

# Ganglion impar block injection

## Introduction

This leaflet provides you with information about a ganglion impar block injection and how the procedure is carried out.

## What is a ganglion impar block?

Ganglion impar block is an injection into a group of nerve cells located in front of the sacrum/coccyx joint at the base of your back (tail bone). The injection consists of local anaesthetic with or without steroid. Your consultant feels that it may reduce your pain. It is used to improve the pain caused by irritated or inflamed nerves in your lower back.

## What is injected?

A small amount of local anaesthetic, with or without steroid is injected into one or more of the costochondral, joints. The steroid acts only around the area it is injected into and does not have the same side-effects as taking long-term steroids.

## Where is the procedure done?

The procedure is carried out in either a day case clinical area or in an outpatient area. An appointment will be sent to you by the pain clinic secretaries stating the location for the injection.

## On arrival

- You may be asked to put on a hospital gown.
- You will be asked to lie on an X-ray trolley.
- X-rays images (pictures) may be used to guide the needle.
- The area to be injected will be cleaned with antiseptic.
- The consultant will numb the area with local anaesthetic, if needed, before injecting the anaesthetic and steroid.
- You may feel some discomfort during the procedure. This is a good sign, as it helps the consultant to know that the needle is exactly where it is needed.

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**Pain  
Management**

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## How long will I be in hospital?

Although the procedure itself only takes about 30 to 45 minutes, you may be on Chedworth Suite for a couple of hours, so please come prepared for this. After the procedure, you will be offered a drink and allowed home shortly afterwards.

## Can I eat and drink?

You may eat and drink as normal, unless your consultant advises you otherwise.

## Can I take my usual medication?

Continue to take your medication as usual on the treatment day. If you are diabetic and your blood sugar is above 15mmol/l on the day of your procedure you may not be able to have your injection, this will be decided by your consultant. If your blood sugars are above 15mmol/l leading up to your injection please contact the consultant's secretary for advice.

## Can I drive home?

For safety reasons you are asked not to drive yourself home. You should also have somebody with you for the rest of the day.

## After the injection

In the days following your injection you may have:

- mild discomfort around the injection site. This is expected and should settle by itself.
- an increase in your normal pain, this is usually temporary. You can take your normal pain relief to reduce any discomfort. If the pain is severe, please contact your GP for advice.
- temporary weakness and numbness in the limb or area that was treated. If it was safe to do so you may have been discharged home with these symptoms. Please take care to protect the area/limb until normal sensation returns; this will help to prevent accidental injuries.

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- an allergic reaction to the injection, which results in redness and itching around the injection site. This is not serious, although we need to know about it for future treatments.
- facial redness or flushing which is a normal response to steroid injection treatment.

### What happens next?

About 6 weeks after your procedure, you will either be asked to telephone our medical secretaries to give a progress report, or your pain consultant will give you a form to post back to us. Either way, the next step in your treatment will be decided according to the amount of benefit you have had from the injections.

If your pain has improved significantly, you will not need a routine follow up appointment. Instead, you will be given a patient initiated follow up which is valid for a year, unless otherwise stated. During this time, you can contact us should the same pain become difficult to manage again. Unfortunately, you cannot request a further appointment to discuss any pain that we have not already assessed.

### Contact information

For injection treatment follow up please contact your consultant's secretary, Monday to Friday between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm.

To rearrange an outpatient appointment, contact the Booking Office on 0300 422 5327

**Dr Young's secretary**

Tel: 0300 422 3383

**Dr Makins secretary**

Tel: 0300 422 2558

**Dr Harper's secretary**

Tel: 0300 422 3383

**Dr Bodycombe's secretary**

Tel: 0300 422 3198

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**Dr Rea's secretary**

Tel: 0300 422 2804

**Dr Patel's secretary**

Tel: 0300 422 2558

For all other queries please contact the:

**Clinical Nurse Specialists**

Tel: 0300 422 2976

An answerphone will be in operation at all times, please leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible.

For urgent calls please contact your GP or NHS 111.

**Further information**

For more information about the Gloucestershire Hospitals Pain Management Service please visit the website below:

[www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/our-services/services-we-offer/pain-management-service/about/](http://www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/our-services/services-we-offer/pain-management-service/about/)

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