

Accurately diagnosing and treating pain with personalized care

Our network of pain management physicians treats a variety of conditions, using comprehensive diagnostic techniques and non-surgical treatments for all musculoskeletal pain.

To learn more about conditions treated, visit NationalSpine.com or ask your affiliated physician.

Medial Branch Block

Pinpoint Pain Sources and Provide Relief

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BEHIND.
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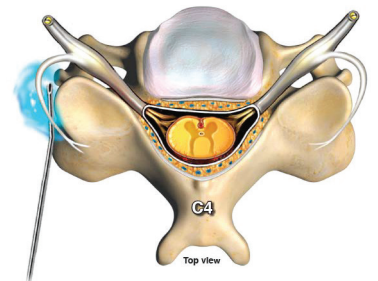
Treatment Brochure



It can be difficult to pinpoint the exact source of pain coming from the back or neck, but a medial branch block injection can help identify and treat a primary pain generator.

With medial branch block injections, medicine is targeted to small nerve branches that carry pain messages to the brain.

Our affiliated physicians have the expertise to know if this procedure is right for you, with the goal of decreasing your pain and improving your ability to enjoy daily activities.



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What is a medial branch block?

A medial branch block is similar to a facet joint injection because they are both designed to identify and treat pain from the spine's facet joints. The injections differ in the areas where the medication is placed.

With a medial branch block, a small spinal needle is placed next to the nerves supplying the facet joint and a numbing medication is injected using fluoroscopic (x-ray) guidance.

With a facet joint injection, the medication is injected directly into the facet joint. This typically contains an anti-inflammatory steroid medication as well.

Facet joints are the small joints located between each vertebra that provide the spine with both stability and flexibility, limiting how far you can twist or bend your back and neck. Facet joints can become inflamed or irritated for a variety of reasons, including injury or arthritis, which cause the facet joints to break down, resulting in direct friction of bones and the formation of bone spurs.

Medial branch blocks disrupt the pain signals sent from the nerves to identify the facet joints as the potential cause of pain.

How long does it take?

Medial branch blocks are performed on an outpatient basis. The procedure typically requires 20 minutes, including preparation time. Afterwards, there is a short period of observed recovery time.

What are the expected results?

Medial branch blocks have been performed safely for many years with excellent outcomes. Back pain may improve immediately after the injection because of the numbing medication, but after it wears off, you may have some soreness.

Is there a longer lasting therapy?

If through medial branch block it is determined that the main source of pain is the facet joints, then radiofrequency neurotomy/ablation may be recommended to offer prolonged relief that you may not otherwise achieve. Radiofrequency neurotomy uses heat to desensitize specific nerves and interfere with their ability to transmit pain signals. Successful neurotomy typically provides relief for 6 to 12 months, and for some up to two years and beyond.

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Medical Services are provided by independently operated physician practices that are branded as National Spine & Pain Centers.

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