

## Patient Information

### Stellate Ganglion Block

#### Day Surgery Unit

You have been offered this procedure as part of your management plan which has been jointly discussed and agreed with your Consultant in Pain Medicine. Your pain is likely to respond to injection treatment if it is in a certain location in the body and is severe. Widespread or mild pain is not responding to injection treatment.

In all cases of managing chronic pain we aim at reduction of your symptoms so that you can achieve better mobility, reduce or discontinue medications, regain control of your life and improve its quality. Reduction of the severity of symptoms by 30% is considered to be successful in managing chronic pain. Pain relief procedures very seldom cure chronic pain. They help break the vicious circle of long-lasting pain symptoms but the duration of action cannot be predicted. The duration of treatment in which injection is considered appropriate will be no longer than 24 months in total.

It is also important to note that no procedure is risk free. Therefore injection treatment will not be repeated many times as the local anaesthetic and the steroid may cause side effects at the site of injection and when absorbed by the blood stream. Some of these effects include lower immunity, making you more vulnerable to infections caused by viruses and bacteria. This is specifically relevant in the current circumstances of COVID-19 pandemic.

Procedure specific risks are described in detail in the information leaflet. Please consider carefully the information provided below for the interventional procedure.

### **What is Stellate ganglion block?**

An injection with a local anaesthetic and slow acting steroid around a small nerve group at the base of the neck can help reduce pain from the face, arm or chest. This treatment may not work for every patient

## **How does Stellate ganglion work?**

Some types of pain are due to dysfunction of the autonomic /sympathetic and parasympathetic/nervous system over which we have got no conscious control. The local anaesthetic injected around the stellate ganglion will reduce the effect of the sympathetic nervous system on the same side of the face, arm and chest.

## **What happens on the day?**

You will be admitted to the Day Surgery Unit as is indicated in your letter. You will be provided with a hospital gown. The clinic nurse will do some checks to make sure you are fit for the procedure. Your doctor will visit you, explain the procedure, answer your questions and ask you to sign the consent form.

You will be taken to the theatre room as you are lying down on a trolley. A small needle is going to be placed on the back of your hand and you will be attached to our monitor for continuous check of your heart beats.

You will have a pillow placed under your shoulders so that your neck is arched. Your neck will be washed with cleaning solution and a drape will be placed around your shoulder. Your head will be supported by a nurse and you will be asked to keep still without talking or swallowing. The injection will be placed on the side of your neck. A small plaster will be placed to cover the injection site.

The whole procedure takes about 5 minutes to complete. After the injection you will be asked to remain lying down for 30 minutes. You will notice that half of your face will start to feel warm, you eyelid can droop and you might not be able to read. If your throat feels numb you may not be able to swallow for a couple of hours. Sometimes your voice can become low. Instructions will be given to you if these persist after 1 hour following your injection. You are not allowed to drive and work on the day of procedure.

## **What are the side effects / complications?**

### **Common**

- Soreness / bruising at the injection site.
- Temporary increase (up to 7 days) in pain following procedure.

## **Rare**

- Headache
- Haematoma (blood clot)
- Infection at the injection site
- Puncture of lung membrane (pneumothorax)
- Allergic reaction
- New pain
- Worsening pain

## **Very rare**

- Convulsions (fits)
- Temporary or permanent disabling nerve damage
- Cardiac arrest (stopping of the heart)

## **You must tell us if:-**

- You may be pregnant
- You are taking warfarin / clopidogrel
- You have a latex allergy
- Your medical condition has changed since you last saw the consultant
- You suffer from epilepsy
- You suffer from diabetes
- If you have cold or temperature.
- You have been admitted to hospital
- You are a wheelchair user and you might need a help with getting out of it
- You are hard of hearing/deaf
- You are partially sighted/registered blind
- You need an interpreter
- You are very nervous about needles, hospitals or medical practitioners

You will be followed up by the pain management clinic. If you have any further concerns about his procedure please contact the appropriate number below between 9am and 5pm:-

RGH: Tel. **01633 - 234938**

**Consultants:** Dr. T. M. Ivanova-Stoilova and Dr. S. Wartan

NHH: Tel. **01873 - 732979**

**Consultants:** Dr. S. Jeffs and Dr. M. Joshi