



Radiofrequency Ablation (RFA)



Radiofrequency ablation is a procedure using a specialized machine that generates radiofrequency current. A special needle is placed next to the nerve which carries pain from spinal facet joints to the spinal cord. The radiofrequency current is passed through the needle. The current generates heat or other physical forces which interrupts transmission of pain. These nerves recover function slowly with time.

Frequently asked Questions:

1. How is the procedure performed?

The procedure is performed under x-ray with the patient lying on her/his stomach. Heart rate and blood pressure are monitored, most patients receive medication for sedation, the skin is anesthetized and then the needles are placed under x-ray guidance.

2. How long does the effect last?

The effect of the procedure is expected to last 6 months or more but there is great variability among patients.

3. May RFA treatment be repeated?

It depends on how long it takes for the nerve function to return. In general, because of risks of repeated x-ray exposure, we do not recommend more than twice per year.



4. What are the complications of RFA?

Many patients report soreness in the area treated for a few weeks. Patients may have increased pain for several days to a week after the procedure. Rare complications include infection, bleeding and nerve damage.

5. Who can have the procedure?

Prior to initial radiofrequency, you should have at least two successful diagnostic nerve blocks performed. (See medial branch block hand out).

6. Who should not have the injection?

If you are taking an antibiotic or if have any active infection, you should not have the procedure without further discussion. Please warn us of any allergy especially to local anesthetics, x-ray dye, seafood, and latex.

For additional info and to watch informational videos on this procedure, please visit our website at:

www.mypainsolution.com

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