



Effective Treatment Begins with Diagnosing Your Condition

Physicians at University Orthopedics work with you to identify, address, and treat specific conditions that are causing you joint pain. As part of a multi-pronged approach to deliver the best treatment options available, our physicians may suggest that patients undergo a branch block procedure.

This procedure serves as a diagnostic test to find the cause of your neck or back pain and is usually completed in 10 to 15 minutes. During the test, your doctor will inject a numbing medication around the small nerves that are connected to your facet joints, which are the joints located on both sides of your spine that allow you to bend and twist.

You will keep a record of the pain you are feeling after the test injection during certain activities. Our doctors will use that information to understand where your pain is coming from and to develop the best treatment plan for you going forward.

University Orthopedics is a regional referral center for Orthopedics, Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation. Our board-certified physicians can help patients address their back and neck pain, joint pain, sports medicine problems, shoulder conditions, pediatric orthopedics, musculoskeletal tumors, hand and wrist problems, hip and knee conditions, trauma, and foot and ankle injuries. These specialists are faculty members of the Department of Orthopaedics at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, and they take an active role in teaching medical students, orthopedic residents, and fellowship sub-specialty surgeons. University Orthopedics leads the way with basic and clinical orthopedic research on the latest advances in orthopedic surgery and injury prevention. Call 401-457-1500 to schedule an appointment.



Center for Spine Health at University Orthopedics
401-414-BACK (2225)
www.universityorthopedics.com

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Branch Block

PINPOINTING PAIN TO DELIVER THE MOST EFFECTIVE TREATMENT



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A Process that is Simple

A branch block procedure is usually completed in a short time frame, and typically involves these steps:

Patients lay on the procedure table with their stomach facing down.

The injection site is cleaned and covered with a special sheet to help keep the area sterile.

Our team measures the patient's blood pressure and heart rate.

Medical personnel numb the area with a local anesthetic.

Patients remain awake as doctors use an X-ray to inject the numbing medication into the right place.

A pain diary is given to the patient.

The numbing medication is not expected to last a long time because it is primarily a diagnostic tool to help your physicians pinpoint the cause of your pain.

The Next Steps

Our team will provide patients with a pain diary to help them keep track of pain levels over the course of the next three days. Patients are encouraged to engage in activities that usually cause them pain in their neck or back. Please note, the pain diary is the most important part of the branch block procedure. It is the pain diary that our team will use to understand where your pain is coming from and what to do next.

While the procedure is safe, there are some possible side effects. There can be pain at the site of injection, dizziness, or numbness around the arm or leg. It is common to have weakness of your arm or leg immediately after the test, which is why we request that you have someone drive you home. A physician from University Orthopedics will review the risks associated with the test with you and can be available if you need medical attention.



Following Up with Your UOI Physician

Our physician will review your pain diary during a follow up examination that is scheduled one week after the procedure. Your physician will be able to determine whether you may be a candidate for a radiofrequency ablation procedure based on your unique results, and will share more information about that treatment option at that time.



Patients who did not find relief after the procedure will continue to work with their physician to find the source of their pain, and explore other treatment options.