

Patient Information Leaflet

Advice following a suprascapular nerve block for chronic shoulder pain relief

Produced By: Pain Clinic

**May 2013
Review due May 2016**



If you require this leaflet in another language, large print or another format, please contact the Quality Team, telephone 01983 534850, who will advise you.

When discharged after this procedure you may still have some of the following:

- Tingly, numb, warm or swollen arm
- A sore/painful injection site

These effects are expected to wear off gradually over the next 24-48 hours.

As explained before your procedure, your existing pain may worsen for while. If it is severe do less/rest for a few days, but try not to immobilise your painful limb for too long as it will stiffen and make re-mobilisation more difficult.

Consider to take standard pain killers (Paracetamol, anti-inflammatories, Codeine or Tramadol) during this period. Even if these haven't helped your chronic pain, these are usually helpful for initial soreness.

Other recommendations:

- Do not drive yourself while you can't move your arm properly!
- If you have a numb arm/hands/fingers you may not feel pain/sharpness/temperature/pressure properly. While numb, we recommend to rest and be mindful of the limb position (changing it regularly) and avoid sharp/hot objects getting close.
- Take it easy for the remainder of the day and resume normal activities as you feel able
- Someone should be with you in the evening and overnight
- Keep the dressing/plaster in place until the next day

If better:

- Very important: gradually increase your exercises or physical activities that have been restricted by your pain. Do so in a paced way, don't abruptly do too much.
- Reduce pain killers gradually, matching your remaining pain intensity. Start with opioids (Tramadol, Morphine, Buprenorphine, Codeine, Dihydrocodeine, Fentanyl), anti-inflammatories and those drugs that give you most side effects. Wean off *slowly*, as otherwise withdrawal symptoms may result. If your pain eventually returns, you can restart the same pain killers – often you will find them more effective than before.

Please carefully note any change in your symptoms/pain and for how long the relief effect lasts. These outcomes will determine further treatment options and will be looked at at your next review.

A follow up appointment will be made for you by the clinic receptionist and sent to you.

Please note:

This procedure has a very low but existing risk of puncturing the lung. This can make the lung collapse and sometime cause a gradual build-up of pressure in the chest on the treated side, affecting blood flow.

Symptoms of this would be increasing breathlessness and/or chest pain on the treated side, with feeling faint or dizzy.

Should you develop these symptoms in the hours of first few days after your injection you should attend A&E immediately through calling an Ambulance. Please take this leaflet with you and show to the doctor or nurse assessing you!

Often but not always a drain has to be sited to relieve pressure and extract air from the chest. For this, an X-ray will be taken.

If you feel you need to talk to a member of the Chronic Pain Team ring (01983) 534722 during office hours; alternatively contact your GP.

You will find more information about chronic pain problems on our website at <http://www.iow.nhs.uk/Trust/Department/chronicpain/index.asp>.

You can get further information on all sorts of health issues through NHS interactive available through Sky TV or online at: <http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/>

For Health advice and out of hours GP service please call the NHS 111 service on: 111

We Value Your Views On Our Service

If you wish to comment on the care which you, your relative or friend has received, we will be pleased to hear from you. Please speak to the person in charge of the ward, clinic or service in the first instance or ask them to contact the Quality Team. If you wish to contact them directly, telephone on 534850.

Alternatively you may prefer to write to:

Chief Executive
Isle Of Wight NHS Trust
St Mary's Hospital
Newport
Isle of Wight
PO30 5TG

You can also share any concerns you have about our services with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) on 03000 61 61 61 or at enquires@cqc.org.uk

All NHS sites are no smoking areas.

If you would like help and advice to stop smoking please call: Freephone 0800 169 0 169 to talk to the NHS Smoking Helpline.

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