

# EURACARE

## PATIENT INFORMATION FORM

### **NERVE BLOCK AND PAIN MANAGEMENT**

#### **What is a nerve block?**

A nerve block is an anaesthetic or anti-inflammatory injection targeted toward a certain nerve or group of nerves in your body to treat pain. The purpose of the injection is to "turn off" a pain signal coming from a specific location in the body or to decrease inflammation in that area.

#### **Why do you need a liver biopsy?**

People who suffer from either acute or chronic pain might have a nerve block injection to achieve temporary pain relief. Often, such pain originates from the spine, but other areas commonly affected include the neck, buttocks, legs and arms. Delivering a nerve block injection allows a damaged nerve time to heal itself from a state of constant irritation. Additionally, by performing a nerve block and then monitoring how the patient responds to the injection, the doctor can often use this information to help determine the cause or source of the pain as well as guide further treatment.

#### **Are there any risks?**

The level of radiation used is very small and the benefits of the procedure are thought to outweigh any risks. Pregnant women should inform their referring clinicians. This procedure is well-established and safe when performed in a controlled setting. However, with any interventional procedure there are risks, side effects and a possibility of complications. Risks include infection, worsening of symptoms and bleeding. The most common side effect is temporary discomfort and numbness in the area injected.

#### **Who has made the decision?**

The consultant in charge of your care and the interventional radiologist performing the procedure have discussed your case and feel that this is the best option. However, you will also have the opportunity for your opinion to be considered and if, after discussion with your doctors, you no longer want the procedure, you can decide against it.

#### **Are you required to make any special preparations?**

Usually, no special preparation is required prior to arrival for a nerve block procedure. You may be asked to wear a gown during the procedure. You will probably be asked to use the restroom before the procedure.

#### **Who will you see?**

A specially trained doctor called an interventional radiologist. They have special expertise in reading the images and using imaging to guide the needle to the area of interest.

#### **Where will the procedure take place?**

In the radiology department – either in the CT scanner or a special Cath lab room. It all depends on where the problem is in the body and which imaging the radiologist feels is best for you.

#### **What happens during the procedure?**

You will be positioned on a table to allow the doctor access to the site(s) to be injected. The doctor will then identify the spot the needle needs to be placed, using palpation and/or imaging guidance. He or she will clean the area with antiseptic

solution, and then the needle will be inserted at a specific depth to deliver the medication as close to the problematic nerve(s) as possible. Contrast material may be injected to confirm needle position prior to injection of medicine. More than one injection may be required, depending on how many areas of pain you have or how large an area needs to be covered. The doctor will most likely tell you when he or she inserts the needle and when the injection is done.

**Will it hurt?**

When the local anaesthetic is injected, it will sting for a short while, but this soon wears off.

**How long will it take?**

Every patient is different, and it is not always easy to predict; however, expect to be in the radiology department for about 30 minutes.

**What happens afterwards?**

You will be taken back to a ward. Nursing staff will carry out routine observations including pulse and blood pressure. You will generally stay in bed for a few hours, until you have recovered and are ready to go home.

**Finally**

Some of your questions should have been answered by this leaflet, but remember that this is only a starting point for discussion about your treatment with the doctors looking after you. Make sure you are satisfied that you have received enough information about the procedure.

**Giving my consent (permission):**

The staff caring for you will ask your permission to perform the procedure. You will be asked to sign a consent form that says you have agreed to the procedure and that you understand the benefits, risks and alternatives. If there is anything you do not understand or you need more time to think about it, please tell the staff caring for you.

