

General guidelines for your Celiac Plexus Block or Neurolysis

Why it's performed:

A celiac plexus block or Neurolysis is performed by endoscopically injecting medication into the celiac plexus nerves (a bundle of nerves that surround the aorta) that carry pain information. This injection will help to relieve abdominal pain that is caused by cancer or chronic pancreatitis. Pain relief is individual to each person. For some pain can be relieved for weeks and for others the pain can be relieved for years.

Prior to procedure:

- The hospital will call you a few days before your procedure to tell you what time to arrive. If you need information prior to receiving this call you can call the endoscopy schedulers at **732-253-3210** or the hospital endoscopy nursing line at **732-828-3000 x 5453**.
- Arrival times are given to admit you to the unit and prepare you for your procedure. Is it important that you arrive at your given time. ***Please Note: Unlike surgery centers this unit treats both inpatients and outpatients and emergencies may arise that may cause delays in scheduled procedure. Please be patient and know that we will provide you with the best care when you go into your procedure. Due to the unpredictable nature of procedure units, please be prepared to spend the day here.***
- Some procedures or recoveries require a hospitalization that we may not always be able to predict be prepared to stay in the hospital if necessary.
- Do not bring any valuables or wear any jewelry the day of your procedure as we do not have space for you to secure belongings.
- Because you will be sedated for the procedure you will need to bring someone with you to take you home. You cannot drive or take public transportation alone for 24 hours after the procedure. We have limited space in the waiting area and we only can allow one visitor to wait during your procedure.
- If you need to send proof of your COVID vaccine please email it to VaccineStatus@rwjbh.org

Medications

- If you are taking medications for high blood pressure, seizures, or if you are taking prednisone, you may take these medications the morning of the procedure or at least 2 hours before the procedure with a small sip of water.

- If you are diabetic:
 - If you take a “sugar” pill, **do not** take it on the day of your procedure.
 - If you are taking regular insulin (R), **do not** take it on the day of your procedure.
 - If you are taking any other insulin preparation, please contact your prescribing physician for instructions.
- If you are taking Coumadin, Plavix, or other blood thinners contact your prescribing physician for instructions on when to stop taking this medication.
- If you are taking aspirin daily continue to take this medication.
- Tell your doctor if you have allergies

Prep/Diet

- **Do not** eat or drink anything 8 hours before your procedure to clear your esophagus of food products.

Day of procedure:

Your procedure will be done at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in the endoscopy suite on the second floor above Walgreens. The address is:

1 Robert Wood Johnson Place
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Arrive 1 ½ hours prior to your scheduled procedure time. When you arrive, you will register and give your medical history. You will need a responsible adult with you who will accompany you home. Bring with you a photo ID, insurance card, a list of medications that you take, and a copy of your COVID vaccine card or a negative PCR COVID test result.

PARKING

- Park in the hospital parking lot located on Little Albany Street and take the elevator to the 1st floor. Bring your parking ticket with you when you enter the hospital. You can stop at the information desk on the 1st floor and have your parking validated for a flat rate of \$6.00. Turn left as you exit the elevator on the 1st floor and take the North building elevators located in the main lobby to the 2nd floor. When you get out of the elevators make a right and another quick right. At the end of that hallway make a left, pass the Cardiac Cath lab and a set of elevators on your right. You will then see the Endoscopy department on your left-hand side above Walgreens and Starbucks.

During the celiac plexus block:

- We will start an IV in your vein to administer fluids and anesthesia and other needed medications.
- A small plastic mouthpiece will be placed between your teeth to prevent damage to the endoscope.
- The endoscope ultrasound endoscope will be inserted through your mouth to your esophagus.
- When the endoscopist visualizes the celiac nerve, the medications will be injected through a needle.

Post procedure:

Once the procedure is finished you will recover from anesthesia in the endoscopy unit. Your doctor will discuss the procedure with you. *Please be advised, it is common after receiving anesthesia to forget some of the conversation you had with your doctor. For this reason, we suggest a family member be available for this conversation at your request.*

Do not drive, operate heavy machinery, or drink alcohol for 24 hours after your procedure. You should go home and rest after your procedure.

We recommend that you eat something light since you have not eaten for over 8 hours. Avoid fried foods, fatty foods and large quantities of food. Things such as: scrambled eggs, toast, a sandwich are good choices. You may eat more food once you have tried something light to make sure you don't become sick to your stomach. You may also have excess gas, so you may choose to avoid foods that cause additional gas, such as beans or carbonated beverages.

Call your doctor right away for:

- Severe or new onset abdominal pain that doesn't improve by passing gas
- Rectal bleeding that turns the entire toilet bowl red
- Fever greater than 101.5 or chills
- Vomiting blood, black or coffee ground looking material
- Severe dizziness, fainting or chest pain

Common side effects:

- Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea
- Excessive gas, bloating or cramping
- Throat discomfort
- Low blood pressure and dizziness

Please Note: These symptoms usually resolve on their own within 24-72 hours after your procedure. If your symptoms are severe or persist please notify your physician or go to the emergency department.

Medications after discharge:

You can resume your daily medications following your procedure. If you are taking any medications that thin your blood discuss with your doctor when to resume these medications.

Commonly prescribed blood thinners:

- Rivaroxaban (Xarelto)
- Dabigatran (Pradaxa)
- Apixaban (Eliquis)
- Heparin
- Warfarin (Coumadin)
- Clopidogrel (Plavix)
- Aspirin
- Enoxaparin (Lovenox)
- Ticagrelor (Brilinta)

Follow up:

Contact your physician to schedule a follow up appointment:

Clinical Academic Building (CAB)
125 Paterson Street
Suite 5100B
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Phone: 732-235-7784

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

Rutgers GI Clinic: 732-235-7784

Robert Wood Johnson Schedulers: 732-828-3000 x3210

RWJ Endoscopy Nurse line: 732-828-3000 x5453 (Leave a message and you will receive a call back within 24 business hours)

For after hour **emergencies** call 732-235-7784

FAQs:

What is the difference between a celiac plexus block and a celiac plexus neurolysis?

A celiac plexus is a group of nerves that supply organs in the abdomen. A neurolysis is a permanent nerve block. A block will temporarily relieve pain.

How many times can you get a celiac plexus block?

If you respond to the first injections you may be recommended for repeat injections. Some may need 2 to 4 and some may need more than 10.

How long does it take for a celiac plexus block/neurolysis to work?

Most people get pain relief within 15 to 20 minutes after getting a nerve block.

