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LUMBAR MEDIAL BRANCH BLOCK PAIN DIARY

What are the lumbar facet joints, and why are medial branch blocks helpful?

Lumbar facet joints are small joints about the size of your thumb nails located in pairs on the back of your spine. They provide stability and guide motion in your back. When the joints become painful, they may cause pain in your low back, abdomen, buttocks, groin and legs.

The medial branches are little nerves which carry the pain signal from the inflamed and damaged facet joints. A medial branch block can be both diagnostic and therapeutic and it serves several purposes. First, by placing numbing medicine around the nerve, the amount of immediate pain relief you experience will help confirm or deny the joint as a source of your pain. Also, time-release steroid will serve to reduce any presumed inflammation around the nerve and may also alleviate pain from the joint.

What should I do before the procedure?

Write down 3 ACTIVITIES that trigger your low back pain and include a PAIN SCORE (0 to 10)

0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

No pain → Mild Pain → Moderate Pain → Severe Pain → Very Severe → Worst Pain

ACTIVITY	PRE-PROCEDURE PAIN LEVEL
1.	
2.	
3.	

What should I do after the procedure?

It is very important for you to fill out a pain diary after the medial branch block so that I can determine how much relief you have had from the medial branch block. Based on the results from the medial branch block, we will then determine whether or not the facet joints are the source of your pain.

Please record the SAME ACTIVITIES you listed above and record the PAIN SCORE while doing these activities at the times listed POST-PROCEDURE.

ACTIVITY	15 MIN	1 HOUR	2 HOURS	1 DAY	3 DAYS
1.					
2.					
3.					

****Please bring this with you to your follow up visit after the procedure!**