

Getting Ready for a Celiac Plexus Block or Neurolysis

What is a celiac plexus block or neurolysis (nerve destruction)?

The celiac plexus is a group of nerves in your abdomen. These nerves go to your abdominal organs, glands, and blood vessels. Feelings of pain from your pancreas, due to pancreatic cancer or pancreatitis, pass through the celiac plexus. Blocking the celiac plexus with medicines that numb the area can help with pain.

How is this done?

A celiac plexus block uses steroids and numbing medicine to help reduce pain in patients with chronic pancreatitis. A celiac plexus neurolysis uses a numbing medicine and a type of alcohol to help reduce pain in patients with pancreatic cancer. Both the block and the neurolysis use ultrasound.

***Important – Please read this material 1 week in advance. We may cancel your procedure if you do not follow the instructions.**

Getting Ready

1. **Plan ahead.** You will get sedatives which can greatly affect your judgment. You must have an adult to drive you home or your exam will be cancelled. You may take a cab or bus home, but, you must have a responsible adult with you other than the driver.
2. Diabetes medicines (oral and insulin) will need to be adjusted for the time you're not eating. Please discuss this with your primary doctor.

3. Never stop taking blood thinning medicines without talking with your doctor first. They will tell you how to safely stop these medicines. Call us if you have questions.
 - a. **7 Days Before**
Stop taking the blood thinner Effient® (prasugrel).
 - b. **5 Days Before**
Stop taking the blood thinners Coumadin® (warfarin) or Plavix® (clopidogrel).
 - c. **2 Days Before**
Stop taking the blood thinners Pradaxa® (dabigatran), Xeralto® (rivaroxaban), Brilinta® (ticagrelor) and Eliquis® (apixaban).
4. Our staff will need to review your health history. This includes any past surgeries, allergies, and medicines that you take. Please bring this information with you.
5. If you use **CPAP or BiPAP** for sleep apnea, please bring it with you. We will need your machine to safely sedate you.

The Day of Your Celiac Plexus Block

- You cannot have any solid food, milk, or dairy products.
- Do not take liquid antacids before your exam.
- You may drink clear liquids until **4 hours** before you arrive (i.e. water, apple juice, soda, Gatorade®). This is done to keep you safe. **Do not drink red liquids.**

- Take your normal medicines with a small sip of clear liquid up to **1 hour** before you arrive. **Do not** take medicines mentioned under the “Important to Know” section.
- **Follow the instructions in your cover letter.** If you are delayed, call us at **(608) 263-8094** to let us know you are going to be late. If you are more than 30 minutes late, we may have to cancel and reschedule. We do our best to stay on time.
- Plan to be with us about 3-5 hours. We will need to be able to reach your driver in the waiting room or by phone.

The Test

A nurse will review your health history and place an IV. We will use the IV to give you medicines which make you feel drowsy and relaxed during your test. The test will take about 1 hour.

After the test you will go to our recovery room for about 1-2 hours. Your driver may sit with you there. Once awake, you may be given something to drink. Sometimes patients will need to stay in the hospital for the night.

Your doctor will discuss results with you before you go home. You and the doctor who referred you will get a copy of the report.

After the Exam and for the Rest of the Day

- Do not return to work.
- Do not drive.
- Do not use hazardous machinery.
- Do not make any important decisions.
- Plan to rest.
- Do not drink alcohol.
- You should be able to resume normal daily tasks the next day.
- You may have a mild sore throat. Salt water gargles should help.
- You will be asked to stay on a liquid diet for the rest of the day.
- You may have some gas pains from the air used to distend your stomach. If you belch, this will help.
- You should have someone stay with you overnight after the test if you receive anesthesia.

How to Contact Us

GI Procedure Center
7:00 AM to 5:00 PM
(608) 263-8094

After clinic hours, call **608-262-0486** to reach the paging operator. Ask for the doctor on call for Dr. _____. Leave your name and phone number with the area code. The doctor will call you back.

If you live out of the area, call **1-800-323-8942**. **If you are not able to keep your appointment**, let us know 5 days in advance.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright ©7/2019. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7507