

Radiofrequency Ablation and Cryoablation

Your treatment will take place on _____ at _____.

Enter through the clinic entrance and follow the path to the Atrium elevators. Go to the third floor. Enter the Radiology Clinic on your right. Check in at the desk.

Radiofrequency Ablation

Radiofrequency ablation (RFA) is a way to treat the nerves around a painful joint. RFA is less invasive than surgery and you will recover much faster. For your comfort, you will have conscious sedation and local anesthesia.

Risks

Problems are rare, but include bleeding, infection, or damage to normal body parts nearby. The treatment area may be sore for 1-2 weeks. It may take up to 2 weeks to start experiencing pain relief.

Before Your Treatment

- **Pain diary:** Please fill out and return the pain diary given to you after your nerve block.
- **Blood thinners:** If you take medicines which thin your blood (aspirin, ibuprofen, Coumadin®, etc.) we will ask you to stop taking them for 2-7 days before the treatment.
- **Insulin:** If you take insulin, take as advised by the nurse coordinator.
- **Implanted devices:** Tell us if you have a pacemaker, defibrillator or other stimulator device in your body.
- **Arrival time:** The nurse coordinator will call you the day before treatment (or on Friday before a Monday treatment) to tell you when to arrive and answer any questions.

- **Diet:** Do not eat or drink after midnight the night before your treatment.
- **Transportation:** You will need to have someone drive you to and from the hospital. You cannot take a cab or other ride service.

The Treatment

Your treatment will last about one hour. You will get conscious sedation. Monitors will check your vitals. You will have an IV line placed in your arm for medicines and fluids.

During the procedure, thin needles are placed through the skin next to sensory nerves around a painful joint. We send low level electric current through the needles to generate heat and destroy nerve tissue.

After the Procedure

You will go to the recovery room where the nurses will check your vitals often. You may have mild pain at the treatment site. We will give you pain medicine if needed. You may have mild nausea. You will be able to drink and eat once you are fully awake.

Going Home

You may keep taking your prescribed medicines and pain pills when you go home.

When to Call

- Signs of infection:
 - Severe pain around the site
 - Redness or swelling
 - White or yellow discharge
 - Foul smell from the site
 - Fever over 101° F
- Pain that doesn't improve after 2 days
- Nausea or vomiting that won't go away

Who to Call

Musculoskeletal Nurse Coordinator
(608) 263-6871

Radiology Scheduling
Monday-Friday, 8 am-5 pm
(608) 263-9729

After clinic hours call **(608) 262-0486** or
(800) 323-8942 to reach the paging operator.

Ask for the bone radiologist to be paged.
If you need help right away, **call 911** or go
to the nearest Emergency Room.

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 © 4/2023 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF#8280.