

## Lumbar, Cervical and Thoracic Facet Joint Injection

### *What are the facet joints?*

Lumbar, cervical and thoracic facet joints are small joints located in pairs on the back of your spine. They provide stability and guide motion in your spine. When the joints become painful they may cause spinal pain.

### *Why are facet joint injections helpful?*

A facet joint injection serves several purposes. First, by placing numbing medicine into the joint, the amount of immediate pain relief you experience will help confirm or deny the joint as a source of your pain. It is possible to obtain relief from the injection alone without follow-up physical therapy, rhizotomy or chiropractic care.

### *What will happen to me during the procedure?*

You will be placed on the procedure table, on your stomach or side. The skin over your back, or neck will be cleaned. The physician will numb a small area of skin with numbing medicine which stings for a few seconds. Next, the physician will use x-ray guidance to direct a very small needle along the joint. Then, a small amount of numbing medicine (anesthetic) will be slowly injected.

### *What should I do after the procedure?*

20-30 minutes after the procedure you may be asked to stand and walk and try to provoke your usual pain. You will report your percentage of pain relief and that will largely determine whether further intervention is needed for the facet joints. On occasion, your arm or leg may feel numb or weak for a few hours.

Pre & Post Procedure instructions can be found under the General Information tab, then select Procedures

*Reminder:* You must have a driver with you for your procedure



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