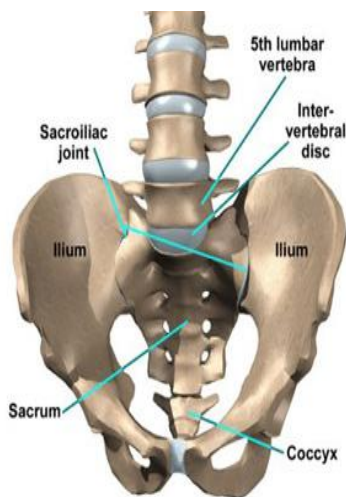
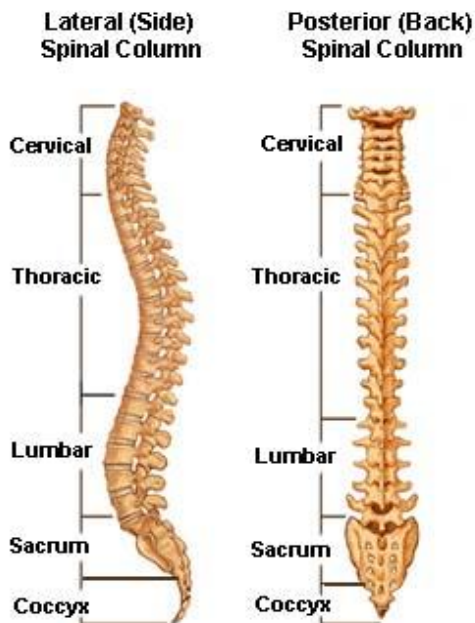


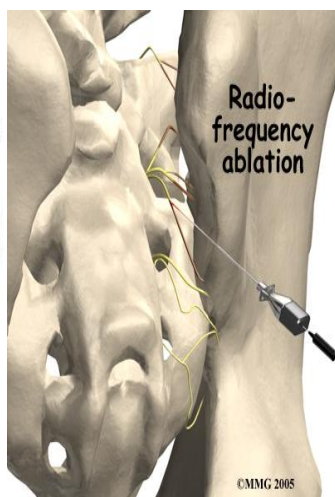


ELPIS PAIN MANAGEMENT CENTER
4122 KEATON CROSSING BLVD.
STE 102
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PH: 636-329-9077
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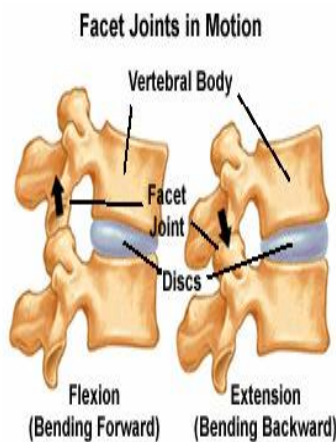
**MEDIAL BRANCH OR FACET JOINT OR SACROILIAC (SI) JOINT
 RADIOFREQUENCY ABLATION (RFA)**



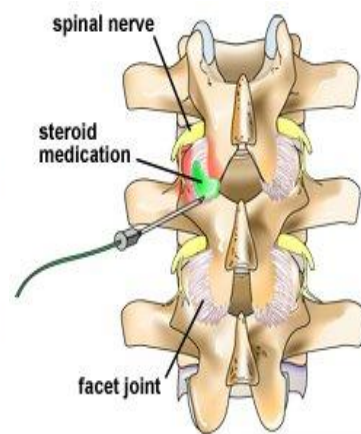
SI Joint



SI Joint Radio Frequency Ablation



Facet Joint



Facet Joint Radio Frequency Ablation

To ensure proper placement of the medication, all of the above procedures will be performed under Fluoroscopic (X - Ray) guidance.

What is a facet or medial branch?

Facet joints are small joints about the size of the thumb nails located in pairs on the back of the neck. They provide stability and guide motion. If the Cervical Facet joints become inflamed, they may cause pain in the head, neck, shoulders, down between the shoulder blades or in the arm. If the Thoracic Facet joints become painful, they may cause pain in the mid back, ribs, chest or abdomen. If the Lumbar Facet joints become painful, they may cause pain in the low back, abdomen, buttocks, groin or legs. Medial branch nerves are the very small nerve branches that communicate pain caused by the facet joints in the spine. These nerves do not control any muscles or sensation in the arms or legs.

What is a Radio Frequency Ablation (RFA)?

A Radiofrequency ablation or RFA is a procedure designed to create a lesion or change the painful transmission from a nerve or group of nerves. This procedure may be performed on many different areas of the body, more commonly, the facet joints and sacroiliac joints. The reason for this procedure is to try to reduce the pain for a longer duration. Often times, previous injections to this area have been given with good relief, but not *extended relief*. The procedure is all done with needles and a thin piece of wire called a “thermister”. There are no cuts made, the only difference with this procedure versus the other injections you may have had is duration of procedure. The needles are generally placed in the same location.

What is the purpose of Radio Frequency Ablation (RFA)?

The reason for this procedure is to try to reduce the pain for a longer duration. Pain relief occurs because small nerve endings causing pain which supply the area are damaged by heat. Performing this procedure can give you relief of your pain from 6 months to 2 years. After a period of time, your nerves may begin to regenerate. If this occurs and your pain returns the RFC may be repeated at your physician’s discretion.

How is Radio Frequency Ablation (RFA) performed?

Upon registering at the Same Day Surgery suite, we will begin your procedure. An IV may be started depending on the location of the facet injection. The skin will be cleansed with an anti-septic solution and numbed with anesthetic. This is felt as a stinging / burning sensation. The doctor will insert the needle into the appropriate location. The procedure takes about 5-10 minutes. A bandage will be applied at the needle insertion site, which may be removed the next morning. You will be discharged when the physician authorizes.

What are the risks of the procedure?

Some risks, although remote include: bleeding, infection, organ injury, nerve injury and allergic reaction to the medication(s) etc. Diabetics may have short-term elevation of blood sugars. People prone to fluid retention may have increased fluid retention for 1-2 weeks.

BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE

1. **Bring your insurance card(s) with you. Leave your valuables at home.**
2. Arrive at **ELPIS PAIN MANEGEMENT CENTER, 4122 KEATON CROSSING BLVD, SUITE 102, O'FALLON, MISSOURI 63368.**
3. You will need a driver to bring you and wait for the duration of your stay here at the Pain Center. You need a driver due to the anesthetic used in the procedure, not due to sedation.
4. **If you prefer to have Intravenous (IV) sedation for your procedure** you are allowed to have solid foods (this includes milk and soup) as long as you **finish eating 8 hours before your procedure.** This means you can have a full breakfast at 6 am if you have a procedure at 2:00 pm. You can also have clear liquids (including jell-o, soda, water, certain clear juices like apple, cranberry grape and other without pulp – no orange or tomato juice) as long as you finish these 2 hours before your procedure. This means that you can have black coffee, jell-o or a glass of water at 12:30 pm before your 2:30 pm procedure.
5. You should take all your morning medicine (except diabetic medicine, if you are having IV sedation) with a sip of water atleast 3 hours before the procedure. We ask that you bring an up-to-date, current list of your medicines every time you come for a procedure or office visit. This is due to the fact many of our patients have multiple doctors and often have their medicines change.
6. Please notify us if you are pregnant, allergic to contrast dye, or iodine.
7. It is necessary for you to stop taking blood thinners for this procedure. (**Ibuprofen, aspirin, coumadin, heparin, lovenox, plavix, aggrenox, etc.**) Before stopping, you should discuss this with your primary doctor to make sure it is alright to do so. **IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO NOTIFY US IF YOU ARE OR HAVE BEEN TAKING BLOOD THINNERS!!**

AFTER YOUR PROCEDURE

1. Pain relief may not be immediate. If pain relief is immediate, it may return within several hours. Sometimes, the pain becomes worse for the next day or two following the procedure. You are expected to recall the duration and effectiveness of the pain relief during and immediately after the procedure.
2. We will keep you in recovery until you are stable. Usually 15 minutes for patient's not receiving IV sedation and 30 minutes for those who do. We will bring your driver or family member back to you in recovery.
3. Your vital signs will be monitored by the nursing staff and we will also make your next appointment for you before you leave.
4. **When you first begin to walk, it is important that you ask the nurse for assistance.**
5. You may not drive; operate heavy machinery or power tools for at least 8 hours after your injection.
6. You may resume your normal medications (except blood thinners-be sure to check with your nurse regarding when and if you may restart these medicines.) You may want to take it easy for the day of your injection; however normal everyday activity is encouraged for the days following.

WHAT TO EXPECT

How quickly can I expect pain relief?

Most patients can expect pain relief within the first 15 to 20 minutes after the injection of local anesthetic. This pain relief may only last several hours; however, if the physician has also used steroid medication, you may also receive some pain relief that will begin roughly 36 hours after the injection. Duration of pain relief is somewhat variable, as it differs from patient to patient.

How much relief will I get & how long will it last?

Relief varies from one person to the next. The steroid may take several days to work and peaks in about 2 weeks. Therefore, it may be several weeks before you feel a change in your pain. After the first day, you can perform activities as before and return to work.

You may notice your pain increase in the next day or two following the procedure. This is normal. If you experience severe neck or back pain, new numbness or weakness of your arms or legs, loss of control of your bladder or bowels, or have signs of infection (temperature greater than 99.9° , drainage, redness/heat at insertion site) – **CALL IMMEDIATELY**. If you experience pain at the injection site, you may apply ice to the affected area for 20 minutes every 2 hours. No heat is to be used on the injection area for the remainder of the day. No tub bath or soaking in water (pools/Jacuzzi, etc) for the remainder of the day. After the first day, you can perform activities as before & return to work. You may receive an appointment to have another injection or an office visit. If you have any questions at this time, don't hesitate to ask.

Please be aware that if you are a Diabetic the use of steroids will elevate your blood sugar, so close monitoring of your glucose by you and your PCP is recommended. If you are on Insulin, it is recommended to contact your PCP prior to the procedure for any adjustments in your Insulin dosing.

NOTE: YOUR PROCEDURE WILL BE CANCELLED IF:

You have an active infection, flu, cold, fever, or very high blood pressure.

You do not have a responsible driver to take you home, arrive late for your procedure

You are unable to follow the medication / fluid restrictions.

Call the office at (636) 329 - 9077 for procedure related questions.
