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## WHAT TO EXPECT: MEDIAL BRANCH BLOCKS

**PURPOSE:** In some low back and neck pain programs, if facet block injections provide good but temporary relief of pain, a medial branch block may be recommended. The purpose of a medial branch block is to diagnose that the small sensory nerves which innervate the facet joints are the pain generator. This is accomplished with using local anesthetic only and providing a patient with a pain log to see if the relief lasts the appropriate amount of time. This is the step must be performed before the radiofrequency denervation can be considered.

**PROCEDURE:** This injection is performed in our procedure suite at our office.

- **Local Anesthetic Injected:**

The procedure is typically performed with the patient lying down on their stomach. The skin and tissue overlying the region is numbed with a local anesthetic delivered through a small needle.

- **Needle Positioned:**

After the skin and tissues are numb, using x-ray guidance (fluoroscopy), your doctor guides a needle close to the irritated nerves in the back or neck.

- **Contrast Dye Injected:**

Contrast dye is injected into the space to make sure the needle is properly positioned near the irritated nerves or nerves.

- **Anesthetic Injected:**

Anesthetic is injected into the medial branches of the dorsi ramus.

- **End Of Procedure:**

The needle is removed and a small bandage is applied. The patient may stay in our office until they feel comfortable to leave. The procedure takes approximately 20 minutes.

A pain log is provided for the patient to complete over the next several hours. This will be reviewed and the patient therefore assessed for radiofrequency candidacy at the next appointment.

**Please call us with any questions or concerns at 303-494-7773**