

### How many injections do I need to have?

If you respond to the first injection, it may be recommended that you receive repeat injections. A series of injections is usually needed to treat the problem. The response for such injections varies from patient to patient; therefore the number of injections may vary as well.

### Will the Stellate Ganglion Injection help me?

The patients who present early during their illness tend to respond better. Patients in the advanced stages of disease may not respond adequately. It is difficult to predict if the injections will indeed help you or not.

### What are the risks and side effects?

Generally this procedure is safe, however with any procedure there are risks, side effects or possible complications. The risks, although infrequent, include: allergic reaction to the medications, nerve damage, bruising at the injection site, infection at the site, injection of medication into a blood vessel.

### Who should not have this injection?

If you are allergic to any of the medications involved in the procedure, if you are on a blood thinning medication, or if you have an active ongoing infection, you should not have the injection.

## Appointment

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Coumadin:

Date to stop:  
\_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*INR is needed the day before injection appointment. If INR is too high appointment may be rescheduled.\*\*\*

Plavix:

Date to stop:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Note: Ask your GP if it is safe to be off a blood thinner or if you need to go onto another, such as Tinzaparin.



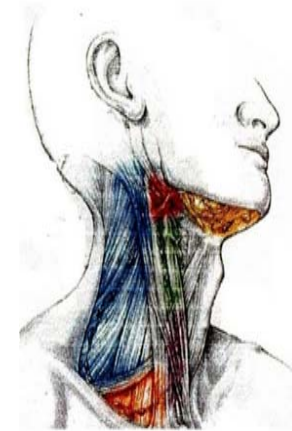
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## STELLATE GANGLION INJECTIONS

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### PAIN CLINIC

### PATIENT INFORMATION



<http://www.issoonline.com/content/1/1/6/figure/F1>

[www.viha.ca/pain\\_program](http://www.viha.ca/pain_program)

Royal Jubilee Hospital  
Tel: (250) 519-1836

Memorial Building-Homer 2  
1952 Bay Street Victoria BC

Nanaimo Regional General Hospital  
Tel: (250) 739-5989  
1200 Dufferin Crescent Nanaimo BC

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### What is a Stellate Ganglion Injection?

A Stellate Ganglion injection is an injection of local anesthetic into the sympathetic nerve tissue. It is one method used to provide pain relief.

### What is the purpose of a Stellate Ganglion Injection?

The injection blocks the Sympathetic Nerves. This may reduce pain and swelling and may improve mobility. The block is done as part of the treatment of Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy (RSD), Sympathetic Maintained Pain, Complex Regional Pain Syndrome, and Herpes Zoster (shingles) pain involving the upper extremities, or head and face.

### How long does the injection take?

The actual injection takes only a few minutes. A total procedure under fluoroscopy (similar to an X-ray) may take up to 30 minutes.

### What is actually injected?

The injection consist of a local anesthetic (lidocaine or bupivacaine).

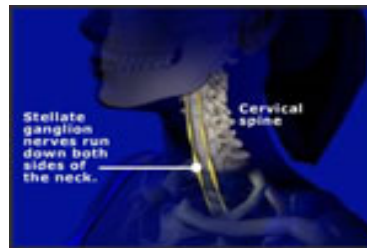
### Will the injection hurt?

Some discomfort is involved because the procedure involves inserting a needle through the skin and deeper tissues. We numb the skin and deeper tissues using a very thin needle prior to inserting the larger needle. You will usually feel strong pressure and not much pain.

### How is the injection performed?

You will either be sitting up or lying on your side during the procedure. Your vital signs such as, blood pressure, pulse and oxygen saturation will be recorded prior to the injection and after the injection.

The skin on the front of the neck, next to the voice box is cleaned with antiseptic solution prior to the injection. Fluoroscopy (X-rays) may be used to guide the needle(s) into the proper position.



<http://www.kellow.com/treatments/minimallyinvasive.php>

### What should I expect after the injection?

Immediately after the injection, you may feel your upper extremities getting warm. You may notice that your pain may be gone or lessened. "A lump in the throat", a hoarse voice and/or some nasal congestion may occur. You may experience "Horner's Syndrome" resulting in a droopy eyelid, enlarged pupil and/or red eye.

### What can I do after the procedure?

You should arrange for a ride home. We advise that you take it easy for a day or two after the procedure. Perform your daily activities as tolerated by you.

Your swallowing may be impaired therefore patient should only have sips of water after the procedure. Some patients may go for physiotherapy immediately after the injection.

Your doctor will advise you as to your best course of action.

### How long do the effects of the medication last?

The local anesthetic wears off in a few hours. The blockade of the nerves may last for many hours. Usually the duration of relief gets longer after each injection.