

## Genicular Nerve Block

A Genicular Nerve Block is a diagnostic procedure that helps to determine what is causing your knee pain. This procedure is done using a fluoroscopy machine (x-ray) that helps the physician locate the nerve branches in your knee.

### Why do I need this procedure?

After evaluating your pain, your physician feels that your pain may be coming from the nerves within your knee joint.

There is a procedure available to treat this type of knee pain. It is done using a device that damages only the nerves that are affected (ablation). This can be done before or after total joint replacement surgery and can relieve knee pain from the following conditions:

- Degenerative joint disease of the knee
- Osteoarthritis
- Before or after a total knee replacement
- Patients that aren't candidates to have a knee replacement or those who prefer to delay having a knee replacement

This procedure may be done in **2 steps or 2 visits**.

- **Step 1:** Diagnostic Genicular Nerve Block: Diagnostic-meaning this is a test or temporary injection which gives us necessary information. It shows how effective this procedure may be in the long run. This involves injecting numbing medicine onto the nerves in your knee. Only one knee is done at each visit and this procedure takes approximately 10 minutes. You may be given a pain diary to document your pain levels for the rest of the day.
- **Step 2:** Genicular Nerve Ablation: The ablation procedure can be scheduled after your pain diary is reviewed by your physician, and if you feel that the test procedure helped relieve your pain. This can be done using the "Cooled Radiofrequency Ablation" or "Conventional Thermal Radiofrequency Ablation". Your doctor will discuss with you which one he believes is best.

The Radiofrequency Ablation may provide:

- Longer pain relief
- Decreased overall level of pain
- Help you return to work or increase the number of hours you are working
- Decrease or possibly eliminate the need for pain medications

### What should I expect during and after the 1<sup>st</sup> procedure?

Try not to take any pain medication just prior to the procedure so that it doesn't confuse the results. Once you are checked in and seen by the physician, your nurse will take you to the procedure room. You will be positioned on your back, and an X-ray machine will be used. You should wear clothing that is very loose. Your doctor will first inject numbing medicine into the skin, and then the doctor will use 3 to 4 needles to inject stronger numbing medicine into the genicular nerve branches. There is no sedation for this procedure because it would confuse the results of the test. We wouldn't know if it was the block or the sedation that helped relieve your pain. After the procedure you will be placed on a stretcher and monitored for approximately 15 minutes. The knee may feel numb for several hours after the procedure and there may be some

discomfort at the injection site. You may apply ice to the area. 15 minutes on and 15 minutes off. You may be asked to fill out a pain diary to document your knee pain for the next 6 to 8 hours. Please fill this out completely and return to us so that a decision can be made on the next step. Expect your pain to gradually return, as this is a temporary block.

**What should I expect during the 2<sup>nd</sup> procedure?**

Once your pain diary has been reviewed and a decision has been made the radiofrequency ablation procedure will be scheduled at First Health Interventional Pain for the “Cooled RF” or may be scheduled at the Surgery Center for the “Thermal RF”. You will have IV sedation for this procedure, so you will be required not to eat or drink after midnight. This procedure takes around 30-45 minutes to complete. Once the procedure has been performed you will be monitored for 30 additional minutes. You must have an adult with you to sign your discharge instructions and drive you home. It is typical to have some discomfort after this procedure for several days. It can take 4-6 weeks to reach the full benefits.