

## Stellate Ganglion Block

### **What is a Stellate Ganglion Block?**

The stellate is a group of nerves in the neck area. A stellate ganglion block is an injection of local anesthetic (pain relieving medication) around this group of nerves used to possibly relieve pain. The pain relief may affect the head, neck, upper arm, and/or upper part of the chest on the side that is being treated.

**A Stellate Ganglion Block may be done to help decrease pain and increase circulation to the affected arm/hand.**

### **What to expect:**

- You must have a driver (no driving for 24 hours). Bring insurance cards and ID.
- **Bring a list of your medications.** If you have an infection and/or are being treated with **antibiotics**, you will need to reschedule after infection has cleared.
- If you are on any blood thinners, please let us know. You may need to be off these for a specific amount of time, and this must be approved by your prescribing physician.
- **Do not take any pain medications 4-6 hours prior to your appointment.**
- Once you are checked in to pain management, an intravenous (IV) will be placed in your arm. Skin temperatures will be checked on both arms.
- For the procedure, you will be positioned lying on your back, with your head tilted slightly back using a small pillow. You will be attached to monitors and have oxygen in your nose.
- The procedure is done using imaging guidance and will take approximately 10 minutes.
- Once the procedure is finished, you will be monitored for 15-30 minutes.

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

You may experience any of the following side effects up to 8 hours after the procedure:

- Drooping eyelids
- Eye redness
- Excessive tearing
- Nasal congestion
- Hoarse voice
- Difficulty swallowing- If you have this problem you need to advance your diet slowly. (Start by drinking small liquids through a straw then gradually advance to solid foods.)
- Feeling like you have a “lump” in your throat
- Tingling, redness or warmth to your arm or hand

These symptoms will disappear within a few hours. You may have mild discomfort once the anesthetic wears off. For this, you may apply ice to the injection site, take your regular pain medication, and rest.

Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room immediately if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Increased difficulty swallowing
- Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath or pain when breathing
- Severe swelling of the neck

Tell emergency room staff that you had a **Stellate Ganglion Block**.