

The lumbar sympathetic chain is a group of nerves in your lower back. These nerves control the blood supply to the legs.

A lumbar sympathectomy is an injection procedure performed to block the sympathetic nerves and increase the blood supply to the skin in the leg. This can reduce your pain and assist with healing.

Phenol is commonly injected and can produce pain relief that may last up to 9 months.

Lumbar Sympathectomy is used for the following:

- To reduce leg and foot pain due to poor blood supply.

- To assist leg and foot ulcers to heal.

- To relieve leg and back pain caused by spinal canal stenosis.

- To treat excessive sweating of the feet.

Prior to the Procedure

All blood thinning products (except aspirin) must be stopped prior to your procedure. You will be advised by letter when to stop taking these medications at the time that your admission date is arranged.

You are able to take your other regular medications with a sip of water on the morning of your procedure.

If you are an insulin dependent diabetic you will always be at the beginning of the list. Please bring your insulin with you and it will be given to you following your procedure.

Hamilton Day Surgery Centre staff will advise you of your fasting and admission times.

You must not have anything to eat, drink, smoke or chew prior to your procedure.

You will need to organise someone to drive you home after the procedure as you will not be able to drive for 24 hours after your procedure.

What Will Happen?

You will be admitted to the day surgery by a nurse and you will be asked to change into a gown.

The Anaesthetist will speak with you and place a cannula (plastic needle) into a vein in your hand.

In the procedure room, you will be assisted into position on the procedure table lying on your side.

The Anaesthetist will give you some sedation into your vein.

An X-ray machine will be used to determine where the Doctor will place the needle for your procedure. This will be marked with a pen.

Local anaesthetic will be injected to numb the discomfort of the spinal needle.

Local anaesthetic or phenol + local anaesthetic can be injected.

The procedure will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

After the procedure, you will be placed on a trolley and taken to recovery, where you will remain for approximately one hour.

After having something to eat and drink, you will be discharged with a carer.

You will hopefully notice increased warmth in your leg or foot and a

reduction in your level of pain.

Post Procedure

You will not be able to drive for 24 hours after your procedure.

We suggest you take it easy for 48 hours prior to returning to your pre-procedure activities.

Caution should be taken if any leg heaviness occurs. If this occurs, you will stay at the day surgery. Activity will be kept to a minimum until some leg sensation returns.

A nurse from HPC will telephone you 24 to 48 hours following your procedure to check on your progress and organise a follow up appointment.

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