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Geniculate Nerve Block for Chronic Knee Pain

What is a geniculate nerve block?

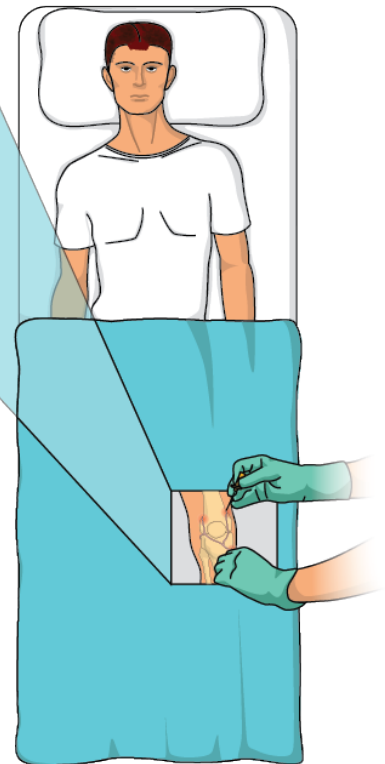
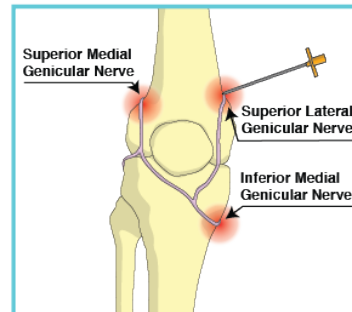
A geniculate nerve block is an injection of an anesthetic mixed with a steroid or non-steroidal medication around the genicular nerves located around the knee joint.

What is the purpose of a geniculate nerve block?

The genicular nerves are the major nerve fibers that carry pain and sensory information from the knee to the brain. Osteoarthritis or degenerative joint disease can cause inflammatory symptoms and chronic knee pain that is transmitted by genicular nerve fibers. The injection may reduce/eliminate chronic knee pain and other symptoms caused by osteoarthritis, joint degeneration, and post knee replacement. These injections can also provide relief when surgery is not recommended or desired.

What should I know about the procedure?

- 1) The procedure is done in the office.
- 2) You will be positioned lying down with your knees slightly bent.
- 3) There will be three injections which take a few minutes each.
- 4) You do not have to be sedated.
- 5) There should be minimal pain because the skin and deeper tissues are numbed with a local anesthetic.



How long do the effects of the medication last?

There is immediate pain relief after the procedure due to the local anesthetic. This wears off in 2-6 hours. The medication begins working within 1 to 2 days following the procedure, its effect typically last for weeks to months and potentially indefinite, depending on the cause of the chronic knee pain.

Complications and side effects:

Complications are very rare but include temporary pain at injection site, infection, bleeding, mild headaches, and leg weakness or numbness. The procedure is performed in a manner such to reduce the risk of these negative side effects from occurring.

How often should this procedure be done?

A genicular nerve block will not cure osteoarthritis. The duration of pain relief will vary from patient to patient. One study suggests that there was 67% pain reduction in patients 6 months following treatment. Repeat injections can be performed to manage pain and control symptoms. These injections can be performed as frequently as every 3-4 months or according to the reemergence of pain and other symptoms.

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