

Advantages

The greatest advantage is the potential for an extended period of pain relief. Patients, who have received temporary pain relief from a nerve block only to have the pain return again, appreciate that the pain relief can last much longer. Recovery from this procedure is usually within one to two weeks. After one day of rest, most patients are able to resume their normal activities. This procedure can be repeated if necessary.



Disadvantages

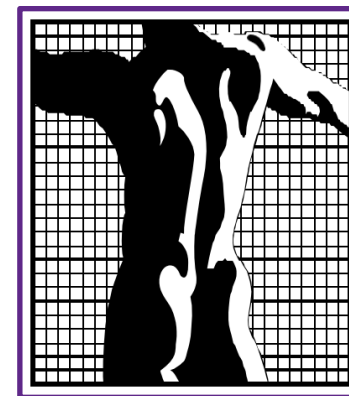
As with any medical procedure, there are risks. Due to the fact that only needles are used for this procedure, the typical risks for bleeding and infection are very minimal. Some patients will experience increased discomfort that can last for 1-2 weeks following this procedure. Other risks, although rare, include, but are not limited to, no effect on pain, increased pain and permanent nerve injury.

When should I return to the office?

You should make an appointment for a follow-up about two weeks after the procedure. You should notify the office if you have unusual problems or concerns, such as fever, bleeding, new severe pain, prolonged numbness or swelling at the injection site.



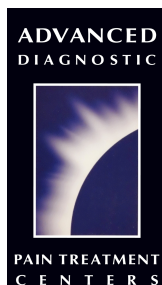
Cryotherapy (Cryoablation)



What you should know about your procedure

**Pain management is a *process*.
Your treatment is tailored to your special needs.**

Cryotherapy is a procedure used to treat pain caused by injured peripheral nerves. This brochure explains the procedure, why it works, how you can prepare, and the advantages and disadvantages of undergoing this treatment.



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What is cryotherapy?

Cryotherapy, also called cryoablation is a procedure performed with or without image guidance, using a needle-like applicator called a cryoprobe. Carbon dioxide gas is used to create intense cold and when applied to a malfunctioning sensory nerve interrupts the nerve's ability to send pain signals to the brain where all pain is ultimately experienced. This provides pain relief often providing a permanent cure.

While cryoablation can be applied to various organs and tissues and is used in a variety of medical specialties, it is primarily used to treat peripheral nerve pain in pain management.

How is cryotherapy done?

There is a two-step process requiring separate visits to the office:

Step One:

Prior to cryoablation the diagnosis of peripheral neuropathy must be confirmed, and the exact location of the lesion identified in 3 dimensions. This is done through a process called mapping. The patient is given a local anesthetic at the site of maximal tenderness. Ultrasound or X-ray guidance may be used for localization. A successful mapping results in 90-100% relief lasting for up to 2 hours. (Then the pain returns.) It is a *diagnostic* injection.



Step Two:

Cryoablation is performed at the second, treatment visit. The mapped site is again identified. After an antiseptic skin prep, local anesthetic is used to numb the skin. Then a small, 1/8" incision is made to allow passage of the cryoprobe through the skin into the fatty layer between the skin and deeper tissue. There are no sensory fibers there and the probe can be moved in that space painlessly. There the cryoprobe freezes the lesion. Usually several 1-minute freezes are performed. Since no local anesthetic is used at the site of the freeze, when the pain resolves the procedure has been successfully accomplished.



How long does the pain relief last?

While no guarantees can be made, pain relief from this procedure is usually permanent. It is one of the few procedures in pain management that has the potential to eliminate the pain.

How should I prepare for my procedure?

- Do not take your pain medications before the procedure if they eliminate pain at the treatment site.
- Take your other medication as regularly scheduled. If you are diabetic, do not take your morning insulin if you will be fasting.
- Although you may drive yourself to and from the procedure, bringing a friend is encouraged.



Any restrictions after my procedure?

Having your procedure performed with just local anesthesia, you can resume your normal activity as tolerated and should be able to return to work the next day.

