



Overview

This procedure temporarily disrupts the nerves of the celiac plexus. These nerves branch away from your spine. They connect to the organs in your abdomen. Pain signals caused by conditions such as pancreatitis or pancreatic cancer travel through these nerves on the way to your brain. A celiac plexus block can relieve your pain.

Preparation

In preparation for the block, you are positioned face down on a table. You are given medication to make you feel relaxed. The skin on your back is numbed.

Needle Placed

The physician inserts a needle through your back and carefully pushes it to the celiac plexus nerves. The needle may be guided with CT scans, or with an x-ray device called a "fluoroscope." This provides video images. The physician may inject contrast dye to make sure the needle is placed correctly.

Nerves Disrupted

The physician injects anesthetic to numb your nerves. If your block is being performed as a test, this may be the end of your procedure. But if your block is being used to treat your pain for an extended period, the physician may inject a substance to disrupt these nerves. This may be repeated to treat the nerves on the other side of your spine.

End of Procedure

When the block is complete, the needles are removed. Your skin is bandaged. You may feel pain relief immediately after the procedure. You may need to have the block repeated if you still feel pain, or if your pain returns.