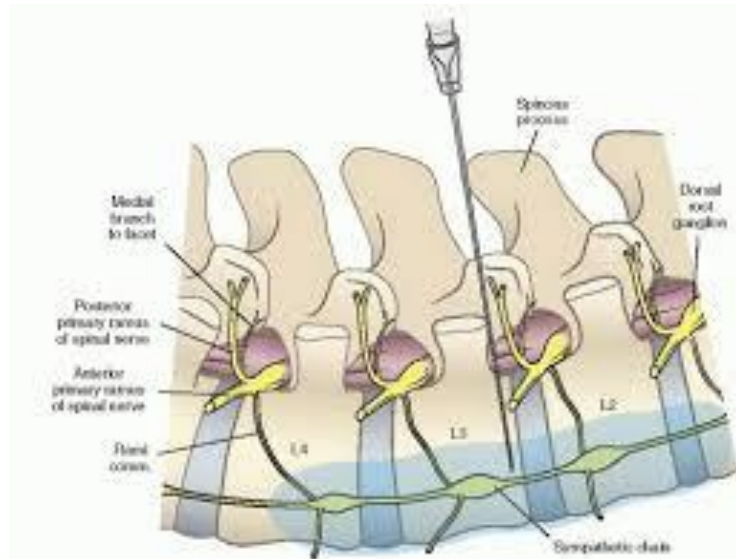




Chemical Lumbar Sympathectomy – Patient Information



What is it?

The chain of nerves which are targeted in this procedure control the amount of blood flow to the lower leg. These nerves are accessed from the back, just to the side of the spine. If these nerves can be stopped from working, this may result in less constriction of your blood vessels and increase the blood flow to the foot.

Indications of lumbar sympathetic block are vascular insufficiency, sympathetically mediated pain (reflex sympathetic dystrophy & causalgia), phantom limb pain, peripheral neuropathies, and post-herpetic neuralgia.

Procedure

This is a day procedure. You will be admitted, asked to partially undress and put on a hospital gown. In the operating theatre, you will be positioned on the x-ray table either on your side or on your stomach. A drip will be placed in your hand and a light anaesthetic used. Local anaesthetic will then be injected in the skin prior to insertion of the needle. The needle will then be placed in the appropriate position. Some dye injected and the x-ray machine is used to check that the position of the needle is correct. A chemical Phenol is injected to stop the nerves from working.

You should allow 90 minutes on the day for nurses to prepare you for theatre and for the doctor to perform the procedure. The procedure itself normally takes between 15 and 45 minutes in the operating theatre.



PainMedSA
Pain & Rehabilitation Specialists

Risks and Complications

New pain on the inner upper thigh can occasionally be experienced for up to 6 weeks

Backache can occur at the needle insertion site

If you notice any of these symptoms contact us immediately:

- high temperatures post procedure
- excessive bleeding or bruising at needle insertion site
- blood in the urine that persists for longer than 1 week