

# After a Nerve Block for Chronic Pain

## Pain

- Nerve blocks may take a few days to 2 weeks to help with pain. You may be sore at the injection site (where the needle was put in). Your pain could also get a bit worse before the treatment starts to work.
- For pain after a nerve block, use an ice pack (or a bag of frozen vegetables) wrapped in a towel or cloth 3 to 4 times for up to 20 minutes each time for the first 24 hours (1 day). You may take extra pain medication if told by your doctor.

**Do not drink alcohol while taking pain pills.**

## Activities

- Cut down on your usual activities, including work, for 24 to 48 hours (1 to 2 days) after your nerve block unless told otherwise by your nurse or pain doctor. You can go back to your usual activities in about 1 to 3 days. Use crutches or a brace when walking, if you have been told to use them.
- **Do not drive, do any strenuous (hard) activities (like heavy lifting over 10 pounds, pushing, or pulling), operate machines (like a lawn mower, snow blower, or power tool), drink alcohol, be a main caregiver (or care for small children), sign legal documents or important papers, or do anything you need to be alert for, until 24 hours after your nerve block.**

## Medications and blood sugar levels

- Take your medications as usual after your treatment.
- If you have diabetes and have had a steroid injection, check your blood sugar levels closely after your treatment.

## **Go to the nearest Emergency Department right away if you have:**

- › Signs of infection at the injection site (like redness, warmth, or swelling)
- › A bad smell from the injection site
- › Bleeding at the injection site
- › Fever (temperature above 38<sup>o</sup> C/100.4<sup>o</sup> F )
- › Allergic reaction (symptoms may include a rash, hives [itchy, red bumps], and/or trouble breathing)
- › New, severe (bad, intense) headache
- › New loss of control of your bladder or bowels (peeing or pooping)
- › New weakness or numbness in your legs

## **If you have any questions, call the Chronic Pain Service to talk to your doctor or nurse:**

- › Phone: 902-473-7672
- › Hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday

### **Looking for more health information?**

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <https://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

*Nova Scotia Health promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.*

*Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!*

[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

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The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.  
If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.