

INTERCOSTAL NERVE BLOCK (s)

An intercostal block is the injection of a local anesthetic (like Novocain) in the area between two ribs where the intercostal nerve is located. An intercostal block is performed for the diagnosis and treatment of upper back, flank, or chest pain that may be neuropathic (nerve) or somatic (muscle, bone) in origin. Temporarily blocking or disrupting painful nerve impulses associated with neuropathic pain can result in various degrees of permanent relief. If, after following a single block, the patient achieves partial permanent relief, a series of several blocks followed by a neurolytic block by cryoablation, radiofrequency ablation or chemical neurolysis can be performed.

The patient will be lying prone (face-down) for the procedure. The area to be injected will be cleansed with an antiseptic. Using X-ray guidance, the doctor will place the needle into the intercostal space below the ribs and then inject the local anesthetic, .

The procedure will take up to 30-60 minutes depending on how many levels need to be blocked. Band-Aids will be placed at the injection sites, and a nurse will monitor the blood pressure and pulse and will review the discharge instructions with the patient before going home.

