



Patient Sticker

Informed consent: Nerve blocks for hand surgery

Why a nerve block for hand surgery?

Hand surgery is often painful post operatively. Nerve blocks relieve all or most of the pain, allowing a faster recovery and often earlier discharge from hospital. Less pain also leads to a more comfortable post operative experience.

What is a hand block?

A local anaesthetic drug is injected close to and around nerves that enervates the hand. These nerves can be blocked in the neck, axilla or peripherally in the forearm. A nerve stimulator or a sonar and a special kind of needle is used to minimize the incidence of nerve damage. The hand block is usually done while under general anaesthetic, although some anaesthetists may prefer to do it in the awake state. The hand block causes a temporary numb feeling or paralysis of the hand and sometimes the arm. The effect usually lasts from 6-24 hours. Your anaesthetist will monitor you during the surgery and evaluate you before discharge to the ward.

Contraindications:

Patients with existing nerve damage to the arm or hand.
Allergy to local anaesthetic drugs.

Despite meticulous care all medical procedures have potential complications.

Complications:

Swelling, sensitivity or bleeding of the injection site.
It might happen that the block doesn't work 100%
Temporary or permanent nerve damage.
Accidental injection of local anaesthetic drug into the blood circulation could lead to seizures or even heart arrest.

The hand block is an option for post operative pain control and it is the patient's choice to decide if he/she wants it. The patient is under no obligation to have it performed. We encourage the patient to discuss any uncertainties about the hand block with the anaesthetist.

I _____ have read and understand the above, and consent to the administration of the hand block on myself/ my dependent.

Signed _____ Date _____
(Patient/parent or guardian)

Please hand the signed copy to your Surgeons rooms for safe keeping.

