



Patient Information Leaflet: Spermatic Cord Block Injection

What is the Spermatic Cord?

The **spermatic cord** is a bundle of structures that runs from the groin to each testicle. It contains blood vessels, nerves and the vas deferens, which is the tube that carries sperm from the testicle.

The nerves within and around the spermatic cord carry sensation from the testicle and surrounding area.

For some men with persistent testicular or scrotal pain, temporarily numbing these nerves can help relieve symptoms and provide useful information about where the pain is coming from.

What is a Spermatic Cord Block?

A **spermatic cord block** is an injection of local anaesthetic around the spermatic cord.

Local anaesthetic temporarily blocks pain signals travelling through the nerves. Depending on your individual circumstances, your consultant may recommend the injection to:

- Help identify whether pain is being transmitted through nerves within the spermatic cord
- Provide temporary relief from testicular or scrotal pain
- Assess your response before considering other treatment options

The injection does not permanently damage or remove the nerves.

The effect of the injection varies from person to person. Some people experience significant pain relief while others may notice little or no improvement.

Why Have I Been Offered a Spermatic Cord Block?

Spermatic Cord Block Injection PIL

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You may have been offered a spermatic cord block because you have persistent or recurrent pain affecting the testicle, scrotum or surrounding area.

This is sometimes referred to as **chronic scrotal pain** or **chronic testicular pain**.

There are several possible causes of scrotal pain. Your consultant will assess your symptoms and may arrange investigations to exclude other causes before recommending a spermatic cord block.

The response to the injection can sometimes help your consultant understand whether the nerves within the spermatic cord are contributing to your pain.

What to Expect on the Day

Before the procedure, your consultant will discuss the injection with you and answer any questions you may have.

Please tell your clinical team if you:

- Take blood thinning medication
- Have a bleeding disorder
- Have any known allergies, particularly to local anaesthetics
- Have an infection or feel unwell
- Have experienced a previous reaction to an injection or local anaesthetic

During the procedure:

- You will lie comfortably on a treatment couch
- Your consultant will examine the groin and scrotal area
- The skin will be cleaned with an antiseptic solution
- The spermatic cord will be carefully identified
- A fine needle will be inserted into the appropriate area around the spermatic cord
- Local anaesthetic will be injected around the nerves
- The needle will then be removed

You may feel some pressure or brief discomfort during the injection.

The procedure itself is usually completed within a short period of time.



Will It Hurt?

You may feel a brief sharp or stinging sensation as the needle is inserted and the local anaesthetic is given.

As the anaesthetic begins to work, the area may feel numb, warm or different from normal.

Most people tolerate the procedure well.

Please tell your consultant if you experience significant pain or feel unwell at any stage.

What Happens After the Injection?

You may be asked to remain at the clinic for a short period following the injection.

The area around the testicle, scrotum or groin may feel numb while the local anaesthetic is working.

Your consultant may ask you to monitor how your usual pain responds to the injection.

It can be useful to consider:

- Whether your pain improves
- How much the pain improves
- How quickly the improvement occurs
- How long the improvement lasts
- Whether your usual activities feel more comfortable

This information can help your consultant assess the likely source of your pain and discuss the most appropriate next steps with you.

How Long Will the Pain Relief Last?



The duration of pain relief varies between patients and depends partly on the medication used.

Because local anaesthetic is temporary, the numbness will gradually wear off.

Your usual pain may return once the local anaesthetic has stopped working.

Some people experience a significant temporary improvement while others notice only a small change or no improvement.

A short period of pain relief can still provide useful information because it may indicate that nerves within the spermatic cord are contributing to your symptoms.

A spermatic cord block cannot guarantee long term pain relief.

After the Procedure

It is normal to experience:

- Mild discomfort or tenderness at the injection site
- A small amount of bruising
- Temporary numbness around the groin or scrotum
- A temporary change in how the testicle or scrotum feels
- Mild soreness once the local anaesthetic wears off

These symptoms should usually settle.

Your consultant or nurse will give you any specific instructions you need before you leave the clinic.

How to Look After Yourself

- Take things gently for the remainder of the day
- Avoid strenuous exercise or heavy lifting until the area feels comfortable
- Wear supportive underwear if this feels more comfortable
- Take simple pain relief such as paracetamol if required and if it is normally safe for you to take



- Avoid rubbing, pressing or repeatedly checking the numb area while the anaesthetic is working
- Follow any additional instructions given by your consultant

Because the area may remain numb for a period after the injection, take care to avoid accidentally injuring it until normal sensation has returned.

What Are the Possible Risks?

Spermatic cord block injections are generally well tolerated, but all injections carry some risks.

These may include:

- **Pain or discomfort** during or after the injection
- **Bruising or bleeding** at the injection site
- A small collection of blood under the skin, known as a haematoma
- Temporary numbness or altered sensation
- **Infection**
- Temporary worsening of your usual pain
- The injection providing little or no pain relief
- An allergic reaction to the medication
- Accidental injection into a blood vessel
- Injury or irritation to a nearby nerve or other structure

Serious complications from local anaesthetic injections are uncommon.

Your consultant will discuss the risks that are particularly relevant to you before the procedure.

What if the Injection Does Not Work?

A spermatic cord block does not relieve pain in everyone.

If you experience little or no improvement, this may suggest that your pain is not primarily being transmitted through the nerves targeted by the injection.



This does not mean that your pain is not genuine. Chronic scrotal pain can have several different causes and sometimes more than one factor contributes to the symptoms.

Your consultant can discuss what your response means and whether further investigation or another treatment approach may be appropriate.

What Happens if the Injection Works?

A good response can help your consultant understand whether the nerves within the spermatic cord are contributing to your pain.

Depending on your symptoms, previous investigations and the duration of your response, your consultant may discuss:

- Continued monitoring
- Medication for pain management
- Further injections in selected circumstances
- Referral to a specialist pain service
- Other treatments for an identified underlying condition
- Surgical treatment in carefully selected patients

A successful spermatic cord block does not automatically mean that surgery will be recommended.

Your consultant will discuss the potential benefits and risks of any further treatment with you.

When to Contact the Clinic

Please contact us if you experience:

- Increasing pain that is not settling
- Significant or increasing swelling
- Increasing bruising
- Redness, warmth or discharge around the injection site
- **Fever or chills**
- Persistent numbness or altered sensation that concerns you



- Any other unexpected symptoms following the injection

These symptoms may require further assessment.

When to Seek Urgent Medical Attention

Seek urgent medical attention if you develop:

- **Sudden or severe testicular pain**
- Rapidly increasing swelling of the scrotum
- Heavy or persistent bleeding
- Severe pain that is getting worse
- Difficulty breathing, facial or throat swelling or other symptoms of a severe allergic reaction
- Severe dizziness, collapse or feeling significantly unwell following the injection

Sudden severe testicular pain should always be assessed urgently because it can occasionally be caused by **testicular torsion**, where the testicle twists and its blood supply becomes restricted.

Will I Need a Follow-Up?

Your consultant may arrange a follow-up appointment to assess your response to the spermatic cord block.

It can be helpful to keep a simple record of your pain before and after the injection, including:

- Your pain score before the injection
- Your lowest pain score after the injection
- How long any improvement lasted
- Whether particular activities became easier
- When your usual symptoms returned

This information can help your consultant decide whether further treatment may be beneficial.



Questions or Concerns?

If you have any questions or concerns before or after your injection, please contact us.

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