

Regional anesthesia (nerve blocks)

All about your anesthesia

Regional anesthesia (also known as nerve blocks) is used to **block the feeling of pain in a particular part of your body** during and after surgery. First, we will numb your skin and then give you an **injection (shot)** in the nerves near where your surgery will be. We usually use regional anesthesia for surgeries on an extremity (arm, leg, hand, or foot).

Types of anesthesia you may get



We might give you regional anesthesia by itself or with another kind of anesthesia. This will be based on your health, your personal preference and the type of surgery you are having.

- **Regional anesthesia** by itself – you may be able to stay awake in the operating room.
- With **IV sedation** – you can range from slight sedation (you feel drowsy but are able to talk) to deep (you sleep through the procedure and have little or no memory of it).
- With **general anesthesia** – you are in a deep sleep while many of your body's functions slow down or need help to work effectively.

Benefits of regional anesthesia



- **Faster recovery** from anesthesia
- **Better pain control** than opioid (narcotic) pain medications alone
- **Less need for opioid** pain medications, which have side effects that include sedation, upset stomach, constipation and itching
- About **6 - 24 hours of pain relief after a single shot**
- **Up to 3 days of pain relief with a nerve block catheter**, also known as a Home Pump
- **Easier to participate in physical therapy**

Risks



Like any other medical procedure, there are risks associated with regional anesthesia. Possible risks include:

- **Infection**
- **Bleeding**
- **Tissue damage** to blood vessels or muscles near the injection
- **Allergic reaction**
- **Failure of the numbing medicine** to work
- Short-term, long-term or permanent **nerve injury** – *very rare* complication

Talk to your anesthesiologist



Your anesthesiologist is a medical doctor who keeps you safe and comfortable during surgery. You can ask them about risks that may occur with your particular anesthetic plan. You should also feel free to talk with your anesthesiologist about your anesthesia choices and how to control your pain after surgery.

Learn more



Go to <http://tiny.cc/OHSUpump> to watch 3 short videos about nerve blocks.

➤ **Call us at 503-494-8311** day or night and ask for the **home pump doctor on-call** if you have questions or concerns about your home pump.

