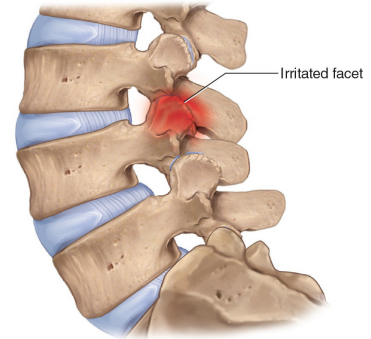


# Facet Joint Injection or Median Branch Block

## What is it?

Facet nerve injections are diagnostic procedures that identify the source of irritation in the nerves that run along the outer edge of the facet joints within the spine. It is common to target multiple facets joints (multiple levels in the spine) during one procedure.



## Typical Medications used:

Lidocaine, Naropin (anesthetic) + Decadron (steroid)

## During the procedure—what to expect

- Using fluoroscopy (x-ray guidance), Dr. Kropp will advance a thin needle adjacent to your spinal column, at the location of the facet nerve
- Once Dr. Kropp is happy with the needle placement, a combination of a steroid and anesthetic medications are then injected for pain relief
- You will remain awake during the procedure, and may experience some slight pressure or discomfort during the injection

## After the procedure—what to expect

- No driving or showering for the remainder of the day.
- When the anesthetic wears off, your symptoms may begin return in part of in full. The steroids usually require three to five days to provide pain relief. Sometimes a “flare up” of symptoms may occur while waiting for the steroid to work.
- We expect you to take it easy for 7 days following your procedure, no vigorous activities or exercise.
- If the pain goes away for even a short amount of time, the diagnostic block is considered positive, which tells Dr. Kropp important information about the source of your pain, and influences future treatment recommendations.
- If there is no change in your pain symptoms after a week, Dr. Kropp may recommend conservative measures, a different procedure, updated imaging, a surgical referral, or want to investigate other possible sources for your pain. The next steps vary significantly from patient to patient.
- After your procedure, our office will print or email you a post op sheet with detailed instructions and guidelines, this will also include a follow up appointment date and time 1-2 weeks after your procedure date.

## Possible side effects

- Steroid may cause facial flushing, hiccups, insomnia, headaches, water retention, increased appetite, increased heart rate, or irritability.
- These side effects occur in only about 5 percent of patients and commonly disappear within one to three days after the injection.

## Video resource: