

Occipital & multiple cranial nerve blocks

Occipital nerve blocks and multiple cranial nerve blocks are procedures used for the treatment of headache disorders. These procedures involve injecting a local anaesthetic with or without a steroid into the nerves that are responsible for the headache pain.

Here is what you can expect at your appointment:

Before the procedure, your doctor will review your medical history and conduct a physical exam. They may also order imaging tests, such as an MRI or CT scan, to help identify what is causing your headaches if this has not been performed previously.

During the procedure, you will be asked to lie down on a table, and your head and neck will be positioned in a specific way to access the targeted nerves. Your doctor will use a small needle to inject the medication around the nerves. You may feel some discomfort during the injection, but the procedure is usually well-tolerated.

Following the injection, you may experience some temporary numbness or tingling in the area that the nerve covers.

You may also notice an improvement in your headache symptoms straight away, but it can take up to 2 weeks to get a full benefit. The effect can last for several weeks to months.

It is important to note that not all patients respond to nerve blocks, and the effects of the injection may vary from person to person. Your specialist may recommend repeat injections if the first one is effective.

It is also important to inform your doctor of any medications you are currently taking, as some medications such as blood thinners carry a higher risk of complications. It is also essential to let your injector know if you have had previous cranial surgery.

Nerve blocks can be an effective treatment option for some patients with headache disorders. They are typically more effective for trigeminal autonomic cephalgias such as cluster headache and hemicrania continua than chronic migraine.