

APC NEWS



What Patients Can Do to Assist in Their Healthcare

As a patient of the Augusta Pain Center, you will be given the tools you need to understand your condition and options on how to improve your health. In turn, we hope to empower patients to work with our providers. Learning to communicate effectively and coming prepared for your appointment is important in your treatment plan.

Prior to your appointment, write out a history and chronological order of symptoms as they appear, or keep a journal to reflect on past visits, activities and pain levels and what treatments and/or medications seem to be making the pain better or worse. Providing this type of information written in a letter in advance could further help with the time management of your visit. With multiple problems, prioritize by which is causing the most pain or most affecting your quality of life.

In addition to bringing a list of medications, dosages, refills needed, current and ongoing issues, and past procedures, write out any questions you have prior to your appointment. Having all this information prepared ahead of time can also be helpful if you are experiencing high levels of pain at the time of your appointment, making it more difficult to communicate your thoughts and questions.

Anger, anxiety and frustration are not uncommon when you are in pain and seeking solutions. However, remember that staying calm will be mutually beneficial to you and your provider. This will open the doors of communication, and information being relayed will not be clouded by negative emotions or perceived hostility, thus having a more productive office visit.

In order to provide high quality care, inter-profession communication is important. The providers at the Augusta Pain Center will relay any diagnosis information to your primary care provider or the referring physician. But it is also helpful for you, as a patient, to share any progress with your referring physician during your next visit, as it may impact how they treat or prescribe medication for any other conditions you may have.



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Finally, show that you are interested in doing your part by asking what you can do to improve your condition, including lifestyle changes. Poor diet, lack of sleep, lack of physical activity and smoking can put you at high risk for illness, disease and injury, also making recovery more difficult. Logging these changes you are making and the results you experience between visits, as mentioned before, are helpful to bring for your provider to review.

Working together with honest communication and a sharing of information will not only help create an effective treatment plan but an efficient visit with your provider.



BENEFITS OF AQUATHERAPY FOR CHRONIC PAIN



GENTLE RESISTANCE

THE HIGHER VISCOSITY OF WATER MAKES MUSCLES WORK HARDER WHEN COMPARED TO THE SAME EXERCISES ON LAND



DECREASED LOAD BEARING

SUBMERSION DECREASES WEIGHT BEARING BY UP TO 90% WHEN SUBMERGED IN NECK DEEP WATER



INCREASED MOBILITY

THANKS TO BUOYANCY OF WATER, IT IS EASIER TO TWIST AND TURN IN WATER, WHICH ALLOWS FOR RANGE-OF-MOTION EXERCISES THAT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE ON LAND



INCREASED BLOOD FLOW

HYDROSTATIC PRESSURE FROM BEING SUBMERGED IN WATER INCREASES VENOUS RETURN AND CIRCULATION BY ASSISTING THE HEART AND DECREASING BLOOD POOLING IN EXTREMITIES



NO FALLING

PEOPLE WITH BALANCE DEFICITS MAY EXPERIENCE LESS FEAR OF FALLING WHILE WALKING AND EXERCISING IN THE POOL

THE POOL ISN'T JUST FOR SUMMERTIME! DID YOU KNOW THAT AUGUSTA PAIN CENTER HAS AN INDOOR WARM WATER POOL AVAILABLE FOR PHYSICAL THERAPY PATIENTS YEAR ROUND?

PROCEDURE EDUCATION: STELLATE GANGLION BLOCK



Overview

Stellate Ganglion Block is indicated for Complex Regional Pain Syndrome, CRPS, formerly known as RSD Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy, head/face/chest/upper extremity sympathetic nerve pain, Raynaud's disease, upper extremity phantom limb pain, atypical chest pain, post mastectomy pain, hyperhidrosis, and shingles pain.

A stellate ganglion nerve block is an injection that numbs branches of nerves in your neck. This helps doctors find and treat a number of problems linked to the nerves. Treatment may require a series of injections.

About the Stellate Ganglion Nerves

The stellate ganglion nerves travel along both sides of your spine. They are associated with a wide range of bodily functions that you don't consciously control. These include blushing, heart rate, sweating and the dilation of your pupils.

Preparation

In preparation for the procedure, you lie on your back. You are given medicine to make you feel relaxed. The skin and tissue of your neck is numbed.

Inserting the Needle

The physician inserts a needle and carefully guides it to the nerves of the stellate ganglion. The physician typically uses an x-ray device called a "fluoroscope." This shows a video image of the needle's position. Contrast dye may be injected to help confirm that the needle is placed correctly.

Injecting the Medicine

Next, the physician injects medicine. It bathes the nerves. It can numb the nerves and reduce inflammation. If these nerves have been a source of pain, the medicine can relieve it. The injection may also provide other benefits, depending on your needs.

End of Procedure

When the procedure is complete, the needle is removed and the injection site is covered with a bandage. You will be monitored for a brief time before you are allowed to go home.

References:

Atlas of Pain Medicine Procedures, Diwan & Staats, 2015;
Chapter 42, Stellate Ganglion Block, R Epter.
www.viewmedica.com © 2016 Swarm Interac

To discuss treatment options and learn more about our diagnostic and state-of-the-art procedures, please call Augusta Pain Center at (706) 738-PAIN and make an appointment with one of our providers.



SEPTEMBER
IS

PAIN AWARENESS MONTH

and a time for people with chronic pain conditions to inform their communities, medical professionals and government leaders of the challenges that affect their health and well-being.

QUICK FACTS ABOUT PAIN

Pain affects nearly 100 million Americans * 1 in 3 people live with pain (not including children with pain) * There are more Americans living with pain than those affected by cancer, heart disease, and diabetes combined * Pain is subjective and varies from person to person * Chronic pain persists, whereas acute pain is temporary * Living with chronic pain can lead to feelings of isolation * Pain is recognized as an invisible illness * Each person's pain journey is unique

8 ITEMS TO MAKE

SUMMER TRAVEL



WITH CHRONIC PAIN EASIER

1 WHEELIE BAGS

Backpacks, duffels and totes can strain your neck, shoulders and back. Bags with wheels that can go forward, backward and side-to-side can take make hauling luggage less exhausting.

2 SUNGLASSES

Whether on a road trip or at the beach, bright sun can trigger migraines. Dark sunglasses can deflect those rays.

3 TRAVEL-SPECIFIC MOBILITY AIDES

Extra light folding wheelchairs, walkers or scooters, as well as folding canes make packing or getting through an airport less cumbersome.

4 MINI COOLER

In addition to keeping medications that require refrigeration cold, consider also packing a cold compress or a cooling cloth to lower your body temperature in the hot summer weather.

5 HYDRATION PRODUCTS

Dehydration can aggravate pain. Bring a sturdy, reusable water bottle, electrolyte drink tablets, and if you are going to an outdoor event, consider a hydration backpack for easy access to water.

6 SUNSCREEN

Anyone being exposed to the sun for a prolonged period of time should wear sunscreen to protect their skin, but especially anyone who is taking medication that may cause increased sensitivity to the sun.

7 EAR PLUGS/EYE MASKS

Sleep is often a challenge with chronic pain, but especially when you are a passenger trying to nap in a car or plane, or staying in a hotel with noisy neighbors or unfamiliar sounds. Drown out the noise and the light with ear plugs and an eye mask to help you get your zzzz's.

8 PACKING LIST

An organized, well thought out list will cut down on the stress and chance of forgetting something necessary. It's also a good idea to share your list with your caretaker or travel companion to make sure nothing has been missed. An easy way to share lists is using the app available on Wunderlist.com.

SAFE TRAVELS!

WWW.AUGUSTAPAINCENTER.COM

DIY Epson Salt Bath Bombs

DETOXIFYING * RELAXING * PAIN-REDUCING

Ingredients:

- 3 tbsp. Epsom salt (or coarse sea salt)
- 1/2 cup baking soda
- 1/4 cup cornstarch or arrowroot powder
- 1/4 cup citric acid
- 1 tbsp coconut oil
- spraying bottle with witch hazel
- liquid food or soap coloring
- essential oils (optional)

Instructions:

1. Divide the epsom salt between 2 bowls. Add one drop of food coloring to each bowl and stir. Let the salts sit while they soak up the dye.
2. Combine the baking soda, corn starch and citric acid in a large mixing bowl. Whisk together with a spoon. Add a few drops of essential oil while you keep stirring.
3. Add the (melted) coconut oil to your dry mixture. Mix all the ingredients together and make sure to smooth out all the lumps.
4. Take a handful of mixture and squeeze it in the palm of your hand. Spray the mixture with some witch hazel until it clumps together. Stir well between each spritz!
5. Add the colored salts to the batch and carefully mix together. You can put a few salts at the bottom of your mold. You can find bath bomb molds online, or use a plastic Easter egg or a muffin tin!
6. Press the mixture down firmly as you fill your mold. Let it sit for a few hours. Carefully take the bath bomb out of its mold. Enjoy!

WARNING: YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE AN EPSOM BATH IF YOU ARE PREGNANT, HAVE AN OPEN WOUND ON YOUR SKIN, SUFFERING FROM A BURN, OR ARE DEHYDRATED.



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During April 20-22, 2018, Richard Epter, MD, William Schiff, Psy.D, and Troy Hutchinson, PA and Jessica Davis, PA attended the Georgia Society of Interventional Pain Physicians (GSIPP) 14th Annual Pain Summit in Greensboro, Georgia. GSIPP is a group of physicians, midlevel practitioners, nurses and office support staff working together to promote interventional pain practice in the State of Georgia, and is the state's chapter of the American Society of Interventional Pain Physicians (ASIPP). Dr. Epter serves on the Board of Directors for GSIPP and was a speaker at this year's convention.

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Work Anniversaries

July: TJ Midla 11 yrs; Elizabeth Gilmer 1 yr

August: Ashlee Delrie 5 yrs; Reven Smalls 2 yr

September: William Schiff, Psy. D. 7 yrs; Carla Rivera 3 yrs; Troy Hutcheson 3 yrs

Birthdays

July: Lynda Henderson 7/2; Jessica Lewis 7/5; Vickey Partlow 7/11; Jessica Davis 7/25; Richard Epter, MD 7/27

August: Tysheika Adams 8/6; Troy Hutcheson 8/7; Jessica Epter 8/8; Keona Johnson 8/10; Dawn Neely 8/17

September: Daniel Lucas 9/10; Jan Phelps 9/15