



Information for You from Your Health Care Team

Cryoanalgesia

Cryoanalgesia is when pain is relieved by freezing the nerve fibers. Extreme cold is applied to the nerve for several minutes. The result is that the nerve temporarily stops working and can no longer transmit pain impulses.

When is cryoanalgesia used?

A facet block is used when a person has:

- Scar neuroma
- Some types of headaches caused by occipital neuralgias
- Back pain caused by facet disease
- Many other somatic pain conducted by individual peripheral nerves

When happens during a cryoanalgesia?

A cryoanalgesia is done as an outpatient procedure at the University Hospital Pain Block area. A local anesthesia is given to numb the area. Next a small incision is made on the skin and the cryo probe is introduced to the painful nerve. The nerve is frozen using nitrous oxide. Nitrous oxide freezes the nerve ending that conducts the pain. Typically this procedure takes about 10 to 15 minutes.

What are the complications?

- Numbness of the area after the procedure
- Infection
- Bleeding