

What is an Intercostal Nerve Block?

An **intercostal nerve block** is an injection of local anesthetic into the space between two ribs. "Intercostal" means between the ribs, and a "nerve block" uses an anesthetic to stop pain signals from reaching the brain.

This injection is frequently done to relieve pain after chest surgery. It may often be used to help diagnose the source of your pain.

When should I get emergency assistance?

Dial 911 or have someone take you to the nearest emergency room immediately if you experience either of the following:

- **Difficulty Breathing:** such as shortness of breath or pain when breathing (particularly after upper back or chest injections)
- **Severe Swelling**

Tell the emergency room staff that you just had an intercostal nerve injection. A physician must evaluate you for bleeding or respiratory complications.

When should I call for help?

If you experience **weakness or numbness in your legs or feet, an increase in pain, fever, or chills**, you may need an immediate evaluation.

Contact Quantum Pain & Spine right away at:
(469) 913-6136

CONTACT US

PHONE:

(469) 913-6136



@quantumpainspine

EMAIL:

relief@quantumssmed.com

WEBSITE:

www.quantumpainports.com

Locations

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QUANTUM
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INTERCOSTAL NERVE BLOCK

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The Day of the Procedure



You must fast for 8 hours before the procedure. This includes:

- Water, mints, gum, ice, candy, and all tobacco products.



You will need to bring a responsible adult with you to drive you home after the procedure. The driver must come into the clinic and wait in the waiting area throughout the entire procedure.



If you are nursing or may possibly be pregnant, please inform your physician. Before the procedure, sedatives (medications to relax you) may be administered.



If you take any **blood thinners** (Aspirin, BC Powder, Eliquis, Plavix, Pradaza, etc.) inform your provider. You may be asked to discontinue use prior to your procedure.



Take your regular medications (**blood pressure, diabetes, etc.**) **4 hours** before your procedure with a small sip of **water**.

- Administer insulin as usual.
- **DO NOT** discontinue any medication without first consulting with your primary care provider or referring physician.

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Procedure

The procedure takes approximately 20-30 minutes.



Step 1

You will most likely be asked to lie on your side or face down on the table.



Step 2

The injected area will be cleansed with an antiseptic solution and then numbed using a local anesthetic.



Step 3

The doctor will then place a thin needle into the intercostal space and inject a local anesthetic.

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After the Procedure

- You may need to be in our recovery room for about 15-25 minutes for observation.
- A bandage may be placed over the injection site.
- A nurse will provide you with a beverage and review your discharge instructions.
- Once the procedure is complete and you are ready to be discharged, our staff will notify your driver, who should be waiting in the reception area, so they can bring the vehicle closer. Our recovery room staff will then escort you in a wheelchair to meet your driver.

POST-CARE

Discharge Instructions

- » Do not drive or operate heavy machinery for at least 24 hours after the procedure.
- » If you are breastfeeding, please discard breast milk for 24 hours following your procedure.
- » You may resume your normal diet.
- » Do not engage in any strenuous activity.
- » Do not take a bath; you may shower.
- » You may remove any bandages in the evening before going to bed.
- » Apply ice to the injection sites (4 times per day for 3 days).

At Home

You may have mild discomfort once the local anesthetic wears off. This usually lasts 2 to 3 days. If discomfort persists, apply ice to the area the day of the procedure and moist heat the day after the procedure.

