

A05lite Spinal Anaesthetic

Further information

You can get more information about this procedure from www.aboutmyhealth.org

You can get information locally from the Senior Nurse at the Horder Centre,
St John's Road, Crowborough,
East Sussex, TN6 1XP.
Tel: 01892 665577
info@hordercentre.co.uk

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www.rcsed.ac.uk



This document will give you information about a spinal anaesthetic. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is a spinal anaesthetic?

A spinal anaesthetic involves injecting drugs into an area called the subarachnoid space near the spinal cord. The drugs numb your nerves to give pain relief in certain areas of your body. Spinals can be used either on their own while you are awake, or in combination with sedation or general anaesthesia. They can also be used after your operation to give effective pain relief.

What does the procedure involve?

Your anaesthetist will insert the needle, inject drugs through it and then remove the needle (see figure 1).

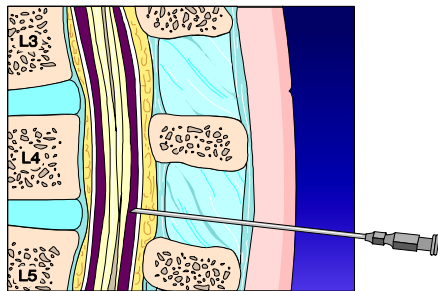


Figure 1

Spinal needle placed in the subarachnoid space

It should not be painful, although it can be uncomfortable.

A spinal anaesthetic usually lasts between one and three hours. The anaesthetist will put enough drugs through the needle to make sure that it lasts longer than the expected length of the operation.

What complications can happen?

- Failure of the spinal
- Low blood pressure
- Headache
- Itching
- Bladder-emptying problems
- Backache
- Loss or change of hearing
- Cardiovascular collapse
- Unexpected high block
- Nerve damage

Summary

A spinal can be used for most people, usually giving a safe and effective form of pain relief both during and after your operation.

Acknowledgements

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