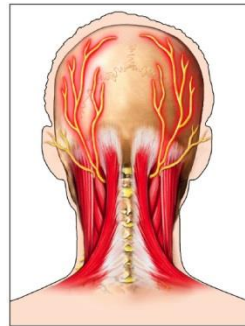


### **Explanation of Diagnosis/Condition**

The occipital nerve begins at the base of the skull and supplies sensation (feeling) to the back of the head. The occipital nerve can act as a generator of various types of headaches.

### **Treatment Options**

Occipital nerve blocks reduce inflammation (swelling) of the occipital nerve and the pain impulses the nerve generates. People with a number of headaches including occipital neuralgia, refractory migraine disorder, and myofascial neck pain can benefit from occipital nerve blocks.



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### **What to Expect with Treatment**

This nerve block involves injection of an anesthetic (e.g., Lidocaine) and a steroid (e.g., Dexamethasone). Please tell your physician if you have had an adverse reaction to either of these in your past.

The onset of pain relief related to the anesthetic may be as early as minutes after the procedure. The effect of the steroid may be felt within 48-72 hours after the injection. The steroid provides longer relief due to its anti-inflammatory effects.

Injections can be repeated, depending on the need and response to the injection.

### **Possible Complications and Instructions**

The risks are generally low. However, as with any injection procedure, risks may include bleeding, pain at the injection site or dizziness. Very rare side effects are skin infection, fat necrosis resulting in skin dimpling, skin infarction or spread of medication to the spinal cord. All risks of steroid exposure are present when this is used. Steroid may cause skin lightening.

Please let your physician know if you are on a blood thinning medication, if you have any active infection, or if your diabetes is poorly controlled. In these cases, the procedure may be postponed.

Special Considerations: If you have diabetes, you should monitor your blood sugar closely after the procedure as the steroid may cause it to increase. If it continues to be elevated, contact your primary care physician.

### **Questions**

The CORE Institute is dedicated to your outcome. If any questions or concerns arise, please call The CORE Institute at 1.866.974.2673.