What is a suprascapular nerve block?
A suprascapular nerve block is an injection of local anesthetic and steroid near the suprascapular nerve. The suprascapular nerve is formed from nerve fibers from the C4, C5, and C6 nerve roots, and it supplies feeling to the shoulder.

Why would a suprascapular nerve block be performed?
A suprascapular nerve block may be performed if you are experiencing pain in the suprascapular and shoulder joint areas. This block may be used to help with acute pain emergencies, postoperative pain, pain from acute injury to the shoulder joint and gridle, cancer pain, chronic regional pain syndrome of the shoulder area, and adhesive capsulitis.

What are reasons NOT to do a suprascapular nerve block?
A suprascapular nerve block will NOT be performed if you have an active infection at the site of injection, bleeding problems, allergy to the local anesthetics and steroid, and/or pregnancy.

What are the preparations for the procedure?
No special preparations are required for this procedure.

What will occur during the peripheral nerve block of the foot procedure?
First, an informed consent paper (giving permission for the procedure) must be signed by the patient. Then, the patient is placed in a sitting position. The shoulder blade area will be cleaned using an antiseptic solution, which is usually betadine unless you are allergic to this. The physician or physician's assistant will first feel for the notch in the middle of the top border of the shoulder blade. Then, a small needle will be inserted into the notch. It is IMPORTANT for the needle to be near the nerve in order to be effective. If the needle is near the suprascapular nerve then you should experience an electrical shock sensation to the affected shoulder. Once that is achieved, a small amount of local anesthetic and steroid will be injected. In addition some patients may require the use of x-ray guidance for this procedure.

How long is the procedure?
Usually, the suprascapular nerve block lasts between 3-5 minutes.

What happens after the procedure?
After the procedure is completed, a band-aid will be applied. You will be given discharge instructions and any follow-up information that is needed.

What are possible complications from the procedure?
This procedure does come with risks. Complications that can occur include but are not limited to intravascular injection, local anesthetic toxicity, pneumothorax, infection, and reaction to the steroid medication.

**What are possible side effects of the steroid medication?**

Administration of steroid medication can cause side effects. Side effects can include but not limited to hyperglycemia, altered menstrual cycle, fluid retention, bruising, insomnia, sweats, hot/cold flashes, flushing of the face, weight gain, epidural lipomatosis, steroid myopathy, avascular necrosis of bone, osteoporosis, and Cushings syndrome.

**Important Notes**

If you suspect you might be pregnant or know you are pregnant, please notify the physician or any staff member, as this is a reason NOT to do the suprascapular nerve block.

If you are a diabetic patient taking insulin or pills to manage your diabetes, the steroid used in the suprascapular nerve block can raise your blood sugar level temporarily. You should monitor your blood sugar level closely after your procedure. If your blood sugar level continues to be elevated then contact your primary care physician for suggestions on how to best manage this issue.

After the procedure, you should resume your regular medications as you are prescribed if those medications were stopped before the injection.

*If you do not understand any part of the above material, please discuss it with your physician or physician assistant*

APM, PSC DWM, PA-C 08/05