



## EUS guided coeliac plexus block

You have been referred for a procedure called endoscopic ultrasound (EUS) to treat pain. Please read this along with the general 'Having an Endoscopic Ultrasound' leaflet.

### Why have you been referred for this procedure?

You have been referred for this procedure to improve symptoms of pain. Most people referred for this procedure have pain which comes from the pancreas. This is may be due to a tumour, or due to long term inflammation of the pancreas (chronic pancreatitis).

The coeliac plexus is a mesh of nerves behind the stomach. These nerves can be irritated by the problem with the pancreas and cause abdominal or back pain. This procedure attempts to block or numb the nerves to reduce the pain they cause.

### What does the procedure involve?

The procedure involves passing a small flexible camera through the mouth to the stomach. More information on this part of the procedure is available in the 'Having an Endoscopic Ultrasound' booklet. The ultrasound probe at the end of the camera shows where the nerves of the coeliac plexus are located. Using the ultrasound picture, a small needle is passed through the stomach to allow an injection around the nerves. Depending on the cause of the pain, concentrated alcohol or strong steroid medication will be injected, along with local anaesthetic.

### What are the benefits of coeliac plexus block?

A coeliac plexus block is unlikely to completely remove or stop the pain entirely but a successful procedure will improve your pain or reduce the amount of pain medication you require. Approximately three out of four patients have an improvement in pain.

### What will I feel in addition to the usual endoscopic ultrasound?

Usually the procedure takes around 15 minutes (about the same time as a usual EUS procedure). You will be given strong pain relief into the vein but you may experience some pain for a few seconds at the time of injection.

### What are the risks or side effects of coeliac plus block?

In addition to the usual risks of endoscopy, common side effects can include:

- Worsening of abdominal or back pain for two to three days following the coeliac plexus block.
- Low blood pressure: This usually only lasts a few hours and can be managed with fluids through a drip for a short period.
- Diarrhoea: This usually settles after 48 hours without needing treatment.

# Information for Patients

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## **Rare complications (less than 1 in 1,000 procedures) can include:**

- Neurological complications such as temporary leg weakness or loss of sensation. Permanent symptoms are extremely rare.
- Temporary loss of bladder and sexual function.

## **What are the alternatives to this procedure?**

An alternative method for performing a coeliac plexus block is to pass a needle through the back using x-ray guidance. Generally, this procedure takes longer and can be more difficult which is why using an endoscopic ultrasound technique is now preferred.

## **What happens after the procedure?**

Following the procedure, you will usually be able to go home after a short period of observation. You will require a responsible adult to accompany you home and stay overnight with you.

If you require this information in another format, such as a different language, large print, braille or audio version please ask a member of staff or email [patientexperience@uhb.nhs.uk](mailto:patientexperience@uhb.nhs.uk).