Information for patients
Pulsed Radio Frequency Treatment

Pain Management Services
What is Pulsed Radiofrequency? (PRF)

Pulsed radiofrequency is a minimally invasive procedure, in which a radio frequency electrical field is applied intermittently to the nerve which may be responsible for transmitting pain signals to the brain. It is applied in short intervals to keep the temperature low around the nerve. This does not destroy the nerve but stuns the nerve which may result in giving you pain relief. In the majority of patients the pain relief can last for a few months or even longer. The procedure may be repeated if the pain returns.

Why am I having Pulsed Radiofrequency treatment? (PRF)

PRF treatments are performed when injection treatment you have had for your pain has worked but only for a limited time. The aim of the treatment is to relieve/reduce pain: this in turn will help to reduce spasm in the overlying muscles and will reduce stiffness.

How is the treatment performed?

You will be asked to lie on your stomach for this procedure. Your back will be cleansed with antiseptic solution and drapes placed over you to prevent infection.

This procedure will be done under x-ray guidance to help the Doctor direct the PRF needle onto the affected area. The skin over the injection site will be numbed using local anaesthetic. An electrode (fine needle) is then inserted through the numbed skin near the nerve which may be involved in pain transmission. The nerve is located by gentle stimulation and you may experience some discomfort, twitching or tingling of the nerve during this procedure, this is a good sign; it helps the Doctor to know he is putting the PRF needle exactly where it is needed. Then the pulsed radiofrequency machine is connected and the electrical field is applied intermittently (which you may or may not feel.)

Immediately after the procedure the majority of patients feel an improvement or relief in their pain, however some patients the relief may take a few weeks to take effect. Some patients may not feel any relief at all.
Are there any risks?

- You may develop a headache, pain relief can settle this, however if the headache continues for more that 24 hours, please seek medical advice.

- Other risks are rare and may include infection, bleeding, temporary worsening of the pain, nerve damage and lowering in blood pressure (with light headiness and nausea).

- There is a very small risk of spinal cord damage. Your leg may feel week after this procedure. If you experience any of these complications seek medical advice immediately.

**After the procedure**
Continue to take your pain medication until you notice an improvement in your symptoms.

You will need to rest until the next day, and then gradually introduce gentle stretching exercised at home.

Dr Gaspar/ Dr Hajek will contact you in two weeks by telephone to assess your progress.

**What if I have further questions?**
Before treatment you should ask your Doctor before signing the consent form.

**After treatment** - (at home) if you have any questions, worries or concerns please contact menzies unit and ask for Jan Gilchrist Chronic pain nurse specialist on 01691-404337 or 404298.

**Urgent calls** - after day surgery should be directed to accident and emergency department or to your GP.
If you require a special edition of this leaflet

This leaflet is available in large print. Arrangements can also be made on request for it to be explained in your preferred language. Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) email: pals@rjah.nhs.uk

There are many benefits in stopping smoking before your surgery. These include:

• The risk of anaesthetic complications, such as breathing problems and chest infections are reduced.
• Wounds may heal more quickly
• Smoker’s bones, muscles and tendons can be slower to grow and repair.
• Risk of blood clots (DVT) is reduced
• Your hospital stay may be shorter

The sooner you give up smoking before your operation the greater the benefits.

Research shows that you are four times more likely to succeed in quitting completely with help and support.

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Hospital Stop Smoking Service
For advice and information on quitting smoking, or for an informal chat, please contact the Hospital Stop Smoking Sister on:
01691 404114

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