

INTERSCALENE NERVE BLOCK INFORMATION SHEET

- ‡ **Interscalene block:** Your surgeon may request this block for post-operative pain relief for surgical procedures involving your shoulder and upper arm. If you elect to have this nerve block, you will receive medication to help you relax through your IV prior to placement of the block. Placement of the block, which numbs your arm, involves a small injection into your neck and usually takes only about 10 minutes to do.

- ‡ **Benefits:** Pain relief following surgeries involving your shoulder and upper arm. Additional benefits include: decreased need for additional pain medications, reduced incidence of nausea and vomiting, and potentially quicker discharge home.

- ‡ **Normal course:** A numb shoulder and arm is expected for approximately 6-18 hours after the surgery. The numbness can last a varied amount of time depending on the type of local anesthetic used, additives, and patient.
 - Once the numbness starts to wear off, the discomfort from surgery may increase progressively over the next 1-2 hours. Therefore, we recommend starting oral pain medication prescribed by your doctor as soon as this begins.

- ‡ **Normal and Expected side effect:** A droopy eyelid on your surgical side and voice hoarseness can last as long as the local anesthetic effect, which is typically between 8 and 24 hours. A sensation of shortness of breath or difficulty taking a deep breath may also occur.

- ‡ **Risks:** Ineffective block, bleeding, infection, reaction to local anesthetic including seizure and cardiac arrest, spinal block, epidural block, collapsed lung, peripheral nerve injury or persistent tingling sensation are potential risks. Please discuss any concerns regarding these risks with your anesthesiologist.

- ‡ **Post Operative Call:** As a follow-up, you will receive a call from a PACU RN the day following surgery (Mon-Fri). If you have additional concerns, please inform the nurse or anesthesiologist.

Please discuss all concerns regarding this procedure and your anesthetic care with your anesthesiologist. Not all patients are good candidates for this type of nerve block. The above information is not intended as a substitute for a complete discussion with your anesthesiologist. It is intended for your education and to enhance your ability to ask informed questions.