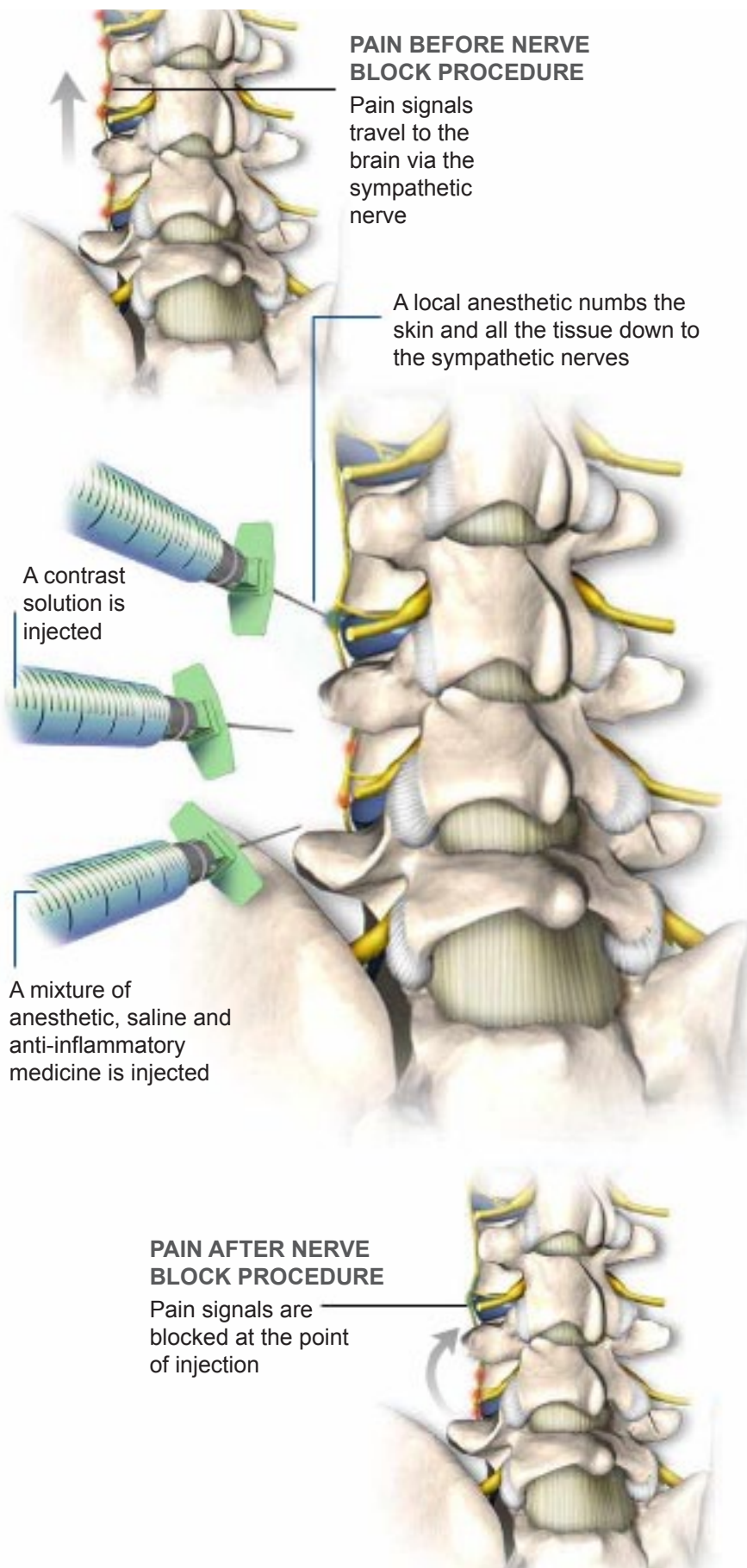


LUMBAR SYMPATHETIC BLOCK



PAIN BEFORE NERVE BLOCK PROCEDURE

Pain signals travel to the brain via the sympathetic nerve

A local anesthetic numbs the skin and all the tissue down to the sympathetic nerves

A contrast solution is injected

A mixture of anesthetic, saline and anti-inflammatory medicine is injected

PAIN AFTER NERVE BLOCK PROCEDURE

Pain signals are blocked at the point of injection

Overview

This procedure is performed to relieve leg pain caused by complex regional pain syndromes, which may develop after an injury to a joint or limb. Usually a series of injections are needed to treat the problem.

IV Administered

Patients lie either on their side or stomach on a table equipped with a special x-ray (fluoroscopic) unit, and an intravenous (IV) line is started to administer medication to relax the patient. A local anesthetic numbs the skin and tissue down to the sympathetic nerves.

Contrast Dye Injected

The physician slides a needle through the anesthetized track. A contrast solution is injected. The physician uses a fluoroscope to identify the painful areas and to confirm the correct location of the needle tip.

Medication Injected

Next, a mixture of anesthetic, saline and anti-inflammatory medicine is injected around the sympathetic nerves to block pain signals from reaching the brain.

End of Procedure

The legs may feel weak or numb for a few hours after the procedure. Then, pain from the legs should improve. More blocks may be repeated about once a week until the pain subsides. Patients who are on blood-thinning medications or who have an infection near the injection site should not receive the block.