SPHENOPALATINE GANGLION BLOCK

What is a sphenopalatine ganglion block?
A sphenopalatine ganglion block is located in the pterygopalatine fossa, which is located behind the nasal passages. The sphenopalatine ganglion block is the application of a local anesthetic onto the ganglion.

Why a sphenopalatine ganglion block be performed?
A sphenopalatine ganglion block may be performed if you are experiencing pain as a result of an acute migraine headache, acute cluster headache, and a variety of facial neuralgias including Sluder's, Vail's and Gardner's syndrome.

What are reasons NOT to do a sphenopalatine ganglion block?
A sphenopalatine ganglion block will NOT be performed if you have an active infection particularly involving the upper respiratory tract, fever, bleeding problems, allergy to the local anesthetic, and/or pregnancy.

What are the preparations for the procedure?
You must have someone of age to drive you home following your procedure. Otherwise, no special preparations are required before a sphenopalatine ganglion block is performed.

What are possible complications from the procedure?
This procedure does come with risks. Complications that can occur include but not limited to local anesthetic toxicity, orthostatic hypotension, nosebleed, infection, numbness of the hard palate, numbness of the teeth and reaction to the local anesthetic.
What will occur during the sphenopalatine ganglion block?
First, an informed consent paper, (giving permission for the procedure), must be signed by the patient. Then the patient is placed on the bed lying on your back. The inside of your nose will be inspected first. Then, one or two cotton-tipped applicators (q-tips), which are soaked in the local anesthetic medication will be inserted into the nostrils until the tips come into contact with the mucosa overlying the sphenopalatine ganglion. The applicators may be in place up to 30 minutes to create the block.

How long is the procedure?
Usually this procedure takes approximately 30 minutes to complete.

What happens after the procedure?
After the procedure is completed, you will be observed for the effectiveness of the block. One common occurrence after this procedure is orthostatic hypotension (sudden drop in blood pressure upon standing). Therefore, you should remain on the bed without any quick movements. First, you may come to a sitting position. Then you may come to standing position once you are ready. Remember, you may experience numbness or a bitter taste in the back of the throat and light-headedness.

Special Notes
Once the physician is comfortable with your response to the procedure, you may be taught how to perform this procedure at home.

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

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