

Introducing nerve blocks

RECOGNIZING AND AVOIDING SIDE EFFECTS

It is vital to understand and consider the complications of nerve block procedures prior to performing them.

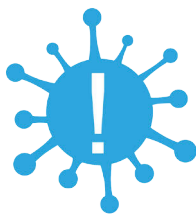
Minor complications

- Hematoma
- Infection
- Limb injury
- Nerve injury
 - chemical irritation from the anesthetic
 - direct trauma from the needle
 - ischemia due to intraneural injection
 - inflammation of the nerve (neuritis)
 - most common

These minor complications are similar to those encountered with a peripheral intravenous start. They are almost always transient (minutes → hours).



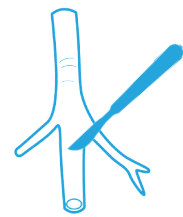
Hematoma



Infection



Limb injury



Nerve injury

Severe complications

- Local anesthetic systemic toxicity (L.A.S.T.)
 - seizure
 - hemodynamic collapse
 - cardiac arrest

These complications are very rare. They are seen in very high volume blocks and are made more likely by intravascular injection.



All of these complications are significantly decreased by the use of ultrasound guidance.