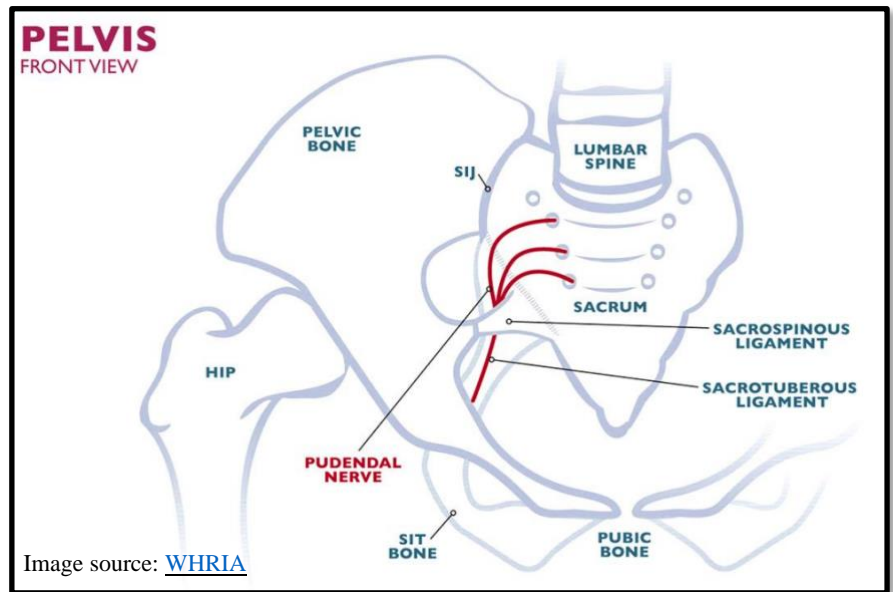


Pudendal Neuralgia (Pelvic Pain)

What is pudendal neuralgia?

Pudendal neuralgia is a type of pelvic pain condition that causes pain, discomfort, or numbness in your pelvis and genital region. Patients may report a sudden or frequent need to go to the bathroom, trouble or pain during sex, and for men, problems getting an erection.

Pudendal neuralgia happens when a major nerve in the lower body (pudendal nerve) is damaged or irritated, such as during surgery, giving birth, or participating in frequent exercises that cause pressure on the pudendal nerve such as bicycling. A tumor or an infection can also squeeze or irritate it. These feelings might be worse when you sit down.



What is a pudendal nerve block?

The pudendal nerve is the main nerve of the perineum and carries sensation from the external genitalia and skin around the anus. There is one nerve on each side of the pelvis. The nerve also helps muscles of the pelvis that aid the process of excretion.

Pudendal nerve blocks involve identifying the location of the nerve under x-ray and then injecting local anesthetic and a steroid to decrease inflammation surrounding the nerve. Often times, only one pudendal nerve is affected; however, in cases such as chronic irritation from bicycling, both nerves may be affected.

How is a Pudendal Nerve Block Performed?

You will lie on your stomach for the procedure. Your buttock region will be cleaned with an antiseptic, and a sterile drape will be placed. A local skin anesthetic is given first to numb the area. Next, a needle is directed towards the target nerve under fluoroscopic guidance (low dose X-ray). Once the needle is in the proper location, a small amount of contrast solution is injected to confirm that the medication will spread in an appropriate area. Next, a local anesthetic such as bupivacaine as well as a steroid will be administered to numb the nerve and decrease inflammation in the area. While pain may decrease right away due to the local anesthetic (which may last several hours), the steroid often can take 1-2 weeks to take effect.

Risks and Complications:

Pudendal nerve blocks are considered safe in general. As with any medical procedure, there are potential risks associated with the procedure. There may be temporary leg numbness or weakness due to spread of medication to the sciatic nerve. As such, you **MUST** have a DRIVER with you who is 18 years or older.

Other complications are bleeding, infection, nerve injury, and allergic reaction. There may also be pain, bleeding, or bruising at the site of needle entry. In some cases, there may be worsening or no improvement of your pain. Through the use of image guidance and sterile technique, we will take every measure to minimize these potential risks and maximize the therapeutic benefit.