Sharp Podiatric
MEDICINE + SURGERY
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Popliteal nerve block instructions

You may have elected to have a popliteal nerve block with catheter (very small tube inserted just behind the lower thigh and behind the knee) and On-Q ball pump (containing a reservoir of local anesthetic). The goal of this injection is completely for comfort and does not increase the success rate of surgery. This means the injection will be given behind your knee just before surgery which will cause your foot to be numb across 90-95% with the exception of the medial margin from your big toe extending to your mid-calf. You may not be able to move the toes directly after surgery but over the next 24 hours, but this will dissipate with time. The local anesthetic given just before surgery is stronger than the local anesthetic in the On-Q ball, which will allow your toes and ankle to start moving after about a day.

Leaking around the catheter site is normal and ***does not*** mean that the block is not working.

You may adjust the local anesthetic flow to increase the amount of local anesthetic if needed and we suggest performing this only periodically to allow the fluid to flow completely around the large sciatic nerve. Laying on your stomach and then sides for 15 min. apiece will allow saturation of the nerve and a more complete nerve block versus simply laying on your back continually.

We would like you to leave the catheter in place until around the third day after surgery, whereby on the first visit back to our office we will remove the apparatus. However some patients find the catheter uncomfortable and elect to remove it early. This is permitted as long as you speak to me first. Occasionally nerve irritation does occur that may last several weeks after surgery but usually resolves without treatment.