

About Caudal Blocks

Caudal nerve blocks are highly effective at reducing pain after surgery. Unlike IV or oral pain medications, caudals target pain relief to the body part where the surgery occurs. A caudal block involves a single injection of numbing medication at the level of the tailbone that will decrease sensation to the surgical area for up to eight hours. The block is performed after your child is asleep for their operation. This method of pain relief is typically used in children for surgeries involving the lower abdomen, pelvis and groin areas.

Benefits

- Safe, effective and targeted pain relief
- Less IV pain medication, faster wake up time, and shorter overall time in the hospital
- Fewer side effects from anesthesia, IV and oral pain medication such as nausea, constipation, and grogginess
- More comfortable when leaving the hospital as compared to IV and oral pain medication

Risks

Harmful effects of caudals are very uncommon:

- Allergy to medication
- Bleeding, infection
- Damage to nerves in very rare cases
- Incomplete pain control, in which case your child would be given IV and/or oral medication

What Happens After the Block

Your child will be able to move his or her legs after a caudal block but they may be heavy or weak which can feel strange. Be sure to supervise your child if they walk or crawl during the first eight hours after surgery.

Your child will not be able to feel temperature normally in the area of the block, so be very careful with hot items or ice packs during this time, as well. Problems with urination are uncommon and go away as the block decreases. When the block wears off your child will need the pain medication provided by your surgeon, which may not be as effective as the block. The first night after surgery can be a grumpy one, which is normal.

We encourage you to ask questions to your anesthesiologist or surgeon if you have any concerns.



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