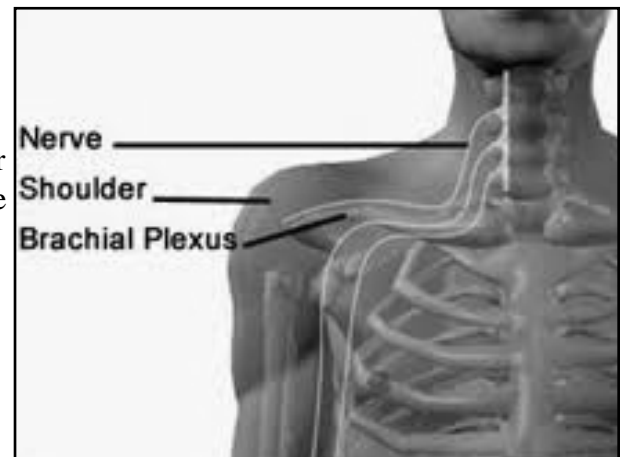




## Interscalene Nerve Block (Shoulder Block)

Arthroscopic shoulder surgical procedures are minimally invasive and involve small incisions on the skin, however extensive work may be done underneath the skin. Shoulder blocks decrease postoperative pain that is associated with the surgical procedure by placing local anesthesia next to the brachial plexus nerves that provide feeling to the shoulder and arm. This procedure is performed by an anesthesiologist who is skilled in this technique.

Interscalene block is done with the help of a nerve stimulator or ultrasound machine. Both enable the anesthesiologist to find the precise spot for placement of the local anesthetic. The local anesthetic will not only decrease feeling in the arm, it will also cause weakness of the arm muscles. An interscalene block typically takes anywhere from 5-15 minutes to perform.



### **Positioning**

You will be positioned comfortably on your back, your neck will be cleansed with antiseptic and you will receive a small amount of sedative to help you relax.

### **Side Effects**

Any nerve block carries potential side effects like nerve injury, seizures, hematoma, infection, and prolonged numbness in part of extremity. Fortunately, these complications are rare.

### **After Surgery**

The medications used for the block are long-acting drugs. The numbness and weakness in your arm may last up to 18 hrs. In diabetic patients the weakness may last longer. To avoid injury do not use the arm except as prescribed by your surgeon. As the block wears off and pain develops you may take pain medication, as previously prescribed and as necessary.

