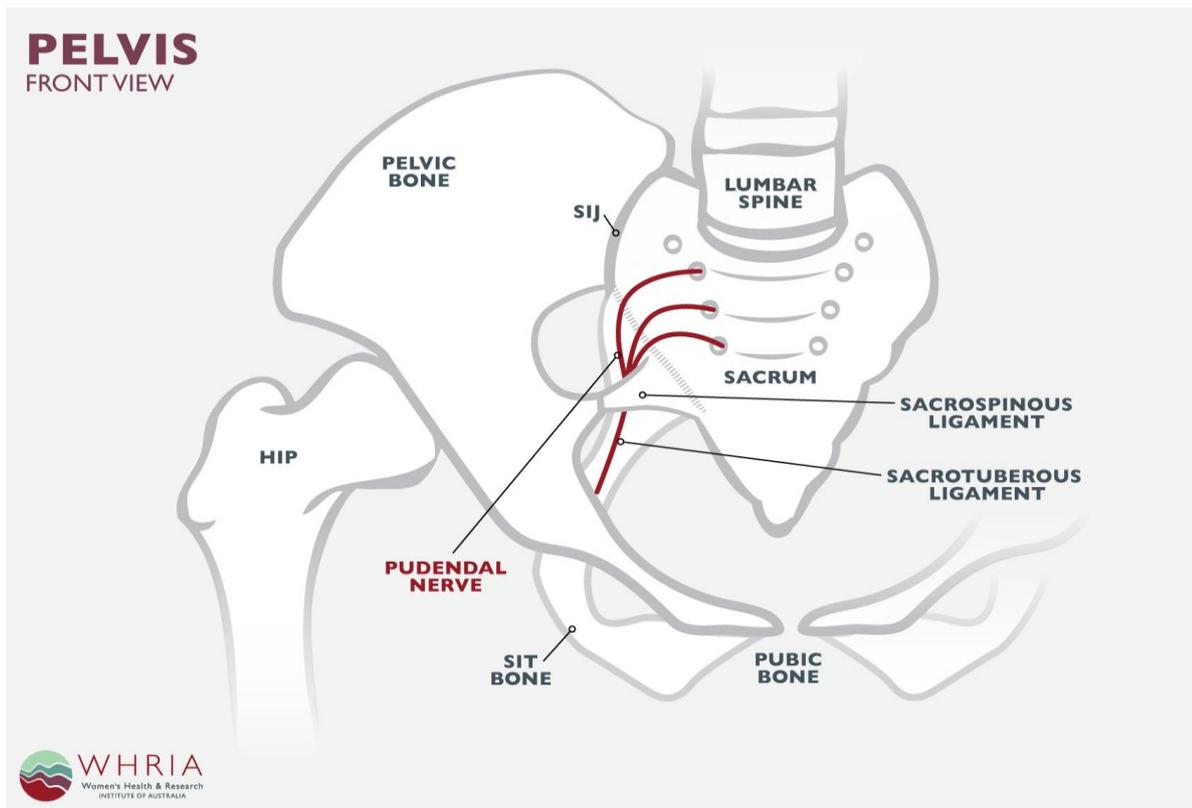


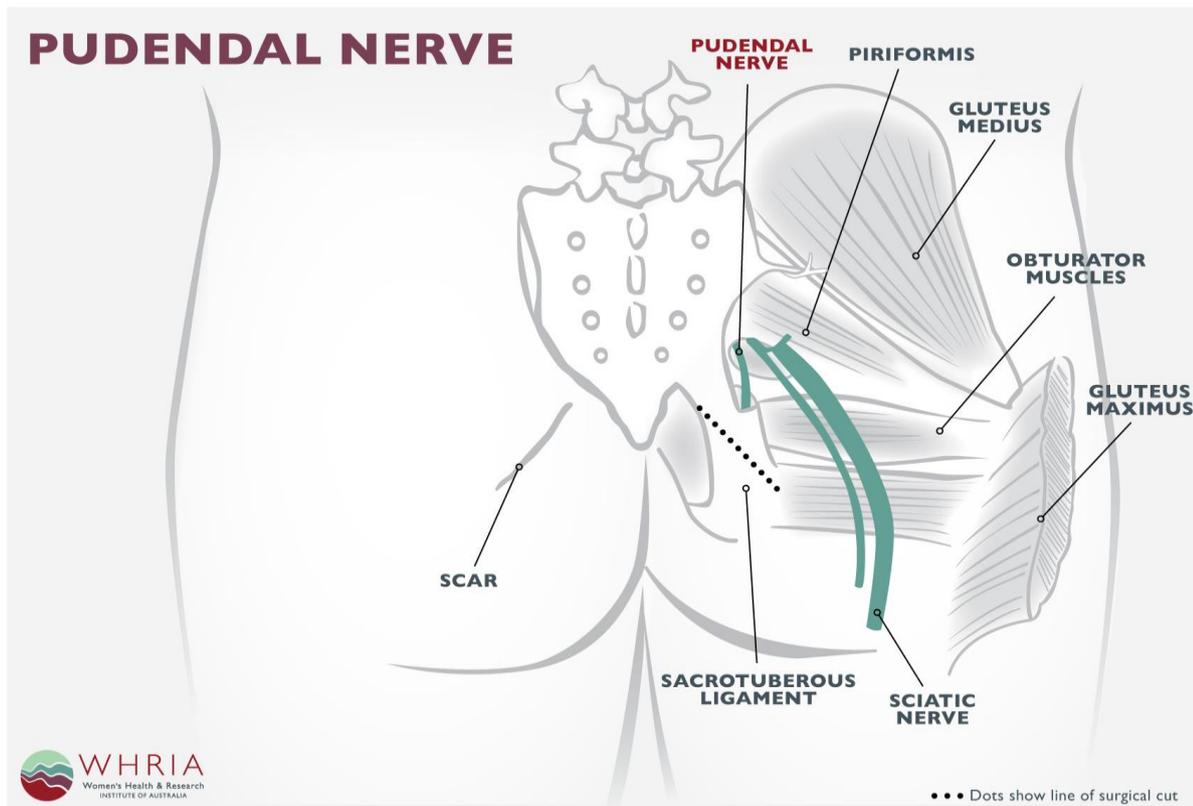
ABOUT THE PUDENDAL NERVE BLOCK (PNB)

The pudendal nerve is found in the pelvis and pudendal neuralgia (nerve pain) may be suspected in some people who experience symptoms of pain and abnormal sensations in the perineum, anal area and sometimes in the lower abdomen.



A PNB consists of injecting a local anaesthetic into the space which the pudendal nerve travels through. The anaesthetic then ‘bathes the nerve’, similar to a dental procedure. This form of local anaesthesia has been used for many years during childbirth and more recently, it has been used as a diagnostic tool. In our department we use this block for most people presenting with suspected symptoms of pudendal neuralgia. It is a diagnostic procedure but some people may experience a benefit from the injection, especially women who experience pudendal nerve pain after childbirth.

The picture below shows the back view of the pudendal nerve travels through the ligaments on the right side. The needle for the pudendal nerve block is inserted at the level of the sacrotuberous ligament, near the dotted line.



PREPARING FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT

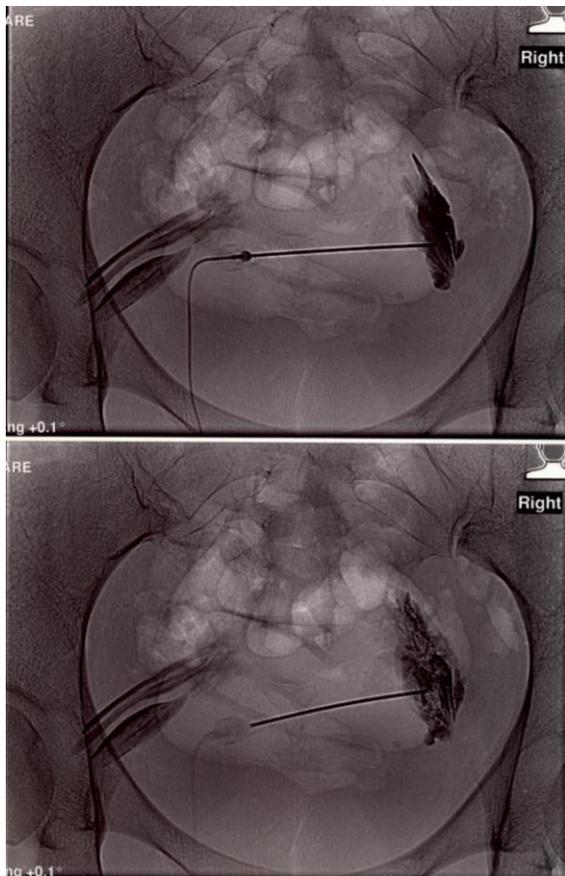
For six hours before the procedure we will ask you to have nothing to eat or drink until after the procedure has been completed. On the day of injection you will present to the Admission desk on the fifth floor of the Prince of Wales Hospital. See *'Information for before and after day surgery'* for more information. Please note down your symptoms BEFORE the block on the form below.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE BLOCK?

You may be given medication to help relax you before the PNB. You will be placed on your front and your doctor will 'map out' on your buttocks, where the injection will go.

Contrast fluid is injected with the anaesthetic and an image is taken so that we can see if the anaesthetic has travelled into the canal where the nerve runs.

The image below shows an example of the contrast fluid in the space around the nerve on the left. On the right side the fluid does not travel down as far, as the space is very small between the two ligaments, indicating that the pudendal nerve may be compromised on the right. Remember this is only one aspect of diagnosis and should not be used in isolation, without your full clinical pain story.



WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOUR PNB

After the block you may experience some or all of the following:

- Numbness in the saddle area, which may or may not move to the buttocks or upper legs.
- A degree of temporary loss of control of the bladder and some flatulence but this should resolve within twelve to twenty-four hours after the injection. Rarely, bladder retention can occur.
- Temporary mild loss of muscle control in the hip or leg, or a numb sensation can occasionally occur, as the anaesthetic can sometimes also numb these areas. This resolves within 24 hours from the injection.
- You may, in rare cases, have a reaction to the block and require medical assessment & management, possibly stay in hospital. However this is unlikely and the majority of people leave the hospital within 4 hours of the injection.
- In rare cases, there may be bruising at the site of injection (upper buttocks) and some pain which may linger on for a few days.

After the PNB you will be unable to drive or return to work on the day of the injection and you must have someone to accompany you home.

For people visiting from out of Sydney, you may need to stay in the area for one to two days following your PNB for follow up appointments, although travel is allowed immediately after release from hospital.

NOTE DOWN YOUR SYMPTOMS BEFORE AND AFTER YOUR PNB

You are asked to regularly rate your symptoms following the block and write them down on the form on the next page so we can assess your response. The numerical rating scale from 0-10 is useful, where 0 is no pain and 10 is the worst imaginable pain.

It is important that you do this, as your feedback will help us determine how to best manage your pain. Please fill out the form below and bring it along to your follow-up appointment.

Our nurse will telephone you for your feedback usually during the week after you received the block, and ensure you have a follow-up appointment booked.

After your PNB, please call WHRIA to make a follow-up visit with the doctor for approximately two weeks afterwards, who will explain the results to you and discuss your future management options.

HYALURONIC ACID WITH YOUR PNB

Your specialist may decide to add hyaluronic acid to your injection. Hyaluronic Acid has been used since the days of microsurgery to stimulate nerve regeneration, especially in transplants and grafts. It is still used today in various preparations, mainly during surgery.

This is a new addition at WHRIA and we postulate that pudendal neuralgia after you give birth is the result of a stretching / elongation nerve injury during the second stage of vaginal delivery. Elongation injuries are similar to surgical injuries as it involves actual breakage of the nerve fibres. Spontaneous healing of the injury occurs during the postpartum period. At times however this healing process is either delayed or inefficient. Via using Hyaluronic Acid as a healing stimulant, we propose to enhance the natural healing process.

More Information:

See our website

- Pudendal Neuralgia
- Painful Sex

More health information sheets

- Understanding Persistent Pelvic & Perineal Pain
- Vaginismus

PUDENDAL NERVE BLOCK: RESULTS FORM

