

Radio Frequency Lesioning of a Facet Nerve

- [What is a Radio Frequency Lesioning?](#)

A radiofrequency lesioning or rhizotomy is the destruction of a facet nerve either in the lower lumbar (back) region or the cervical (neck) region using radiofrequency waves (heat waves).

- [Why is a Radio Frequency Lesioning performed?](#)

A radiofrequency lesioning is done if you have pain due to disease in the facet joints of your spine and you have had appropriate pain relief from your facet nerve blocks.

- [What happens during the procedure?](#)

You will be placed in the prone position (face down) on the x-ray table. Your back or neck will be cleansed with an antiseptic solution and the area will be numbed. The doctor will use fluoroscopy (a special x-ray) to guide the placement of the needle probe to the area of the facet joint. Radiofrequency waves are transmitted to lesion (destroy with heat) the involved nerve.

- [How long does the procedure take?](#)

About 30 minutes to an hour, depending on the number of nerves to be done.

- [Contraindications to the procedure](#)

Bleeding problems, infection at the injection site.

[Special care afterward:](#)

Band-Aid will be applied to the injection site. You will be taken to the observation area. A nurse will take your blood pressure, pulse and respirations. You will be required to stay at least 30 minutes. The nurse will review your discharge instructions with you and then you will be able to go home. You will be required to call the next day to discuss how much pain relief you feel.