



What is Radiofrequency Ablation: Video Transcript

Dr. Yoon: What is Radiofrequency Ablation? (0:01)

“Radiofrequency ablation is a procedure that we use to treat back pain and neck pain in patients caused by arthritis of the spine. Other names that people might call it as a cauterization procedure or a burning procedure. When we are doing an ablation procedure, what we're doing is literally cauterizing or burning those little sensory nerves so that they're not providing sensation to the joints anymore, so you don't feel those painful joints anymore, and therefore, hopefully won't have any more back or neck pain.

What is the procedure like? (0:50)

The procedure itself takes about 30 minutes to 45 minutes depending on how many levels we need to treat. We numb up the area beforehand and you get the sedation [00:01:00] beforehand, so to you, you usually don't feel much during the procedure. What I always recommend to patients, if you are gonna move forward with an ablation treatment, is make sure ice is gonna be your best, best friend. Ice 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off for the next few days.

How Long is the recovery process? (1:18)

The ablation procedure can take up to four to six weeks for you to notice a difference. And the reason behind this is that yes, we burn the nerve, but the brain doesn't realize that. We have burned the nerve yet, so it's still sending those painful signals until it's realized that, oh, it's not really going anywhere. And then the brain will kind of catch up to the nerve hopefully in that four-to-six-week range. Just like hair, nails, skin – nerves grow back. Fortunately, and unfortunately, studies show it takes about nine months for these nerves to grow back, and so patients usually get somewhere in between six to 12 months of relief with this procedure.”

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