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RADIOFREQUENCY

Radiofrequency is a nerve lesioning procedure that may provide prolonged pain relief for up to two years. Radiofrequency is performed as an outpatient procedure, where the patient receives intravenous sedation for comfort. The procedure consists of placing special needles using live x-ray on select nerves which have been found to be the cause of pain. Once the exact nerve is identified using electrical stimulation, it is heated. The heat destroys the nerve and temporarily interrupts pain for a prolonged duration. The procedure is not permanent because the nerves eventually regrow. However, in patients who fail to have a significant length of relief from various steroid injections, radiofrequency can often provide a six month to two year period of pain relief. A radiofrequency procedure may initially increase a patient's pain for up to two weeks before relief is realized.