



Radio waves course through the needle to the target area to relieve pain.

Relief

for Chronic Pain Comes in Radio Waves

Patients with chronic neck, low back, and knee pain may find relief from a procedure called radiofrequency ablation (RFA), now being offered at Pain Medicine of Evangelical.

WHAT IS RFA?

Radiofrequency ablation, also called radiofrequency neurotomy, is a minimally invasive outpatient procedure performed in the pain medicine procedure suite. Pain medicine specialist, Lukasz Chebes, MD, uses real-time imaging technology to safely and accurately guide a needle to the nerves being treated. Local anesthesia and/or intravenous sedation is used to reduce discomfort. Radio waves course through the needle and heat up nerve tissue to block pain signals.

WHAT BENEFITS DOES IT OFFER?

RFA blocks painful signals from the targeted nerves to the brain, thereby providing pain relief, Dr. Chebes said. It is a low-risk outpatient procedure that typically takes only a matter of minutes to perform.

Lukasz Chebes, MD

“There is little to no downtime or restrictions for the patient,” he said. “RFA provides an alternative to both pain pills and more invasive surgery.”

The procedure may not offer patients a permanent fix for their pain. Still, research shows that RFA effectively provides pain relief for several months up to a year and, in some cases, for years, Dr. Chebes said. The procedure can be repeated if the pain returns.

WHO IS A CANDIDATE FOR RFA?

“As with any medical procedure, radiofrequency ablation is not appropriate for every patient and is not indicated to treat all types of chronic pain,” said Dr. Chebes. “A pain specialist can help to determine if RFA is the right treatment for the patient.”

RFA may be recommended for patients whose chronic neck, back, or knee pain does not improve with other forms of treatment, such as medications or physical therapy.

“Prior to considering RFA, a pain specialist will perform diagnostic or prognostic nerve blocks to determine if a patient would be an appropriate candidate for the procedure and is likely to benefit from it,” said Dr. Chebes.

TALK TO YOUR DOC



To learn more about RFA and other treatment options for chronic pain, talk to your doctor about a referral to Pain Medicine of Evangelical.