

# Musculoskeletal ADVISOR

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A Special Report From Englewood Health



Gregg Lobel, MD, the chief of anesthesiology at Englewood Health, prepares for a surgery.

## In Major Shift, Regional Anesthesia Reduces Reliance on Opioids

Anesthesiologists and pain medicine specialists are increasingly avoiding or reducing dosages in narcotics as the new standard of care. At the same time, advances in imaging and more portable ultrasound machines have allowed anesthesiologists to perform regional blocks of peripheral nerves with increased accuracy and frequency.

“Our precision with regional anesthesia has grown exponentially over the last few years as the imaging has become more fine-tuned thanks to the combination of ultrasound guidance and skill,” said Gregg Lobel, MD, the chief of anesthesiology at Englewood Health.

The ultrasound allows Dr. Lobel and his colleagues to visualize the nerve bundle that innervates the targeted

area and to visualize the needle as it approaches the nerve. They stop the needle just short of the nerve to inject numbing local anesthetic. Ultrasound can visualize the local anesthetic surrounding the nerve.

The anesthesiology team can then thread a catheter through the needle to deliver a steady stream of site-specific nerve blocking agents to aid postoperative recovery for three days or more.

“By doing this, we reduce the need for opioids, which greatly reduces the future risk of substance abuse, so there’s tremendous upside to this method if you look at the risks and benefits,” Dr. Lobel said. “I’m glad to see it become the new standard of care.”

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## Bloodless Techniques Used In Spinal Deformity Surgery

One of the unique surgeries performed at Englewood Health that is not offered by many other health systems is bloodless spinal deformity surgery, which is reserved for patients such as Jehovah’s Witnesses, for whom blood transfusion is not an option.

“Spinal deformity surgery is associated with significant blood loss, often requiring the transfusion of blood and/or blood products,” said Yakov Gologorsky, MD, a neurologist at Englewood Health. Spinal deformity surgery is associated with

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## New Surgical Technologies Improve Rotator Cuff Repair

Rotator cuff tears can be difficult to treat because healing can be problematic, especially as patients increase in age, according to Manesha Lankachandra, MD, a hand and upper extremity surgeon with Englewood Orthopedic Associates, part of the Englewood Health Physician Network.

“The initial treatment for most rotator cuff tears is trying nonoperative treatments like physical therapy, anti-inflammatories and cortisone injections,” Dr. Lankachandra said. “But if those methodologies aren’t effective or stop working, then your next option is an arthroscopic surgery to repair the torn cuff.”

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