

## REGIONAL ANESTHESIA

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**Gregg Lobel, MD**  
Chief of Anesthesiology

Opioids used for postoperative analgesia are frequently associated with adverse effects, including nausea and constipation, preventing smooth postoperative recovery.

"Suffering from those side effects causes stress," Dr. Lobel said.

"That's not healthy for recovery."

Regional anesthesia is commonly employed as brachial plexus blocks, paravertebral blocks, femoral nerve blocks, and sciatic and popliteal nerve blocks.

Academic research has found regional blocks to produce superior outcomes compared with IV opioids. A May 2020 study in the *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery* (2020;102[10]:866-872) found that fascia iliaca nerve blocks following a hip fracture in a geriatric population were linked to shorter hospital stays, faster recovery and reduced opioid use. Similarly, on the other end of the spectrum, a review (*Cochrane Database Syst Rev* 2013;[12]:CD009587) found that a fascia iliaca compartment block for femur fractures in children provides better and longer-lasting pain relief with fewer adverse events than IV opioids.

Multimodal analgesia, which includes nerve blocks, is one of the most effective methods to reduce narcotic use in pain management, Dr. Lobel explained. It maximizes analgesic efficacy through the combination of several analgesic regimens, while minimizing undesired adverse effects, he said.

"We often turn to multimodal treatments since we can prescribe a combination of non-steroidal anti-inflammatories with COX-2 inhibitors, acetaminophen and gabapentin, among others that work on different pain pathways," Dr. Lobel said. "Each diminished

consumption and related adverse effects.

"In pain management at Englewood, we're dedicated to working with the patient to deliver the best outcomes that accelerate recovery and decrease the need for opioids," Dr. Lobel said.

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—Gregg Lobel, MD

pain pathway then decreases the need for stronger treatments, which helps us reach our goal of ultimately reducing the need for narcotics."

A 2019 literature review published online by *Orthopedic Surgery* (2019;11[5]:755-761) found multiple benefits of multimodal analgesia for total knee arthroplasty when compared with standard care: greater pain relief, better knee recovery, and reductions in opioid

As a specialist in pediatric anesthesiology, he finds that commitment strikes a chord with parents who are concerned that childhood sports injuries will introduce their kids to narcotic pain medicine.

"They're usually relieved to find that our multimodal approach with nonopioid analgesic medications and regional anesthesia mean their kids won't take anything much stronger than Tylenol." ●



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