

Benefits and risks

Benefits of the RFA procedure

- Longer-lasting pain relief compared to steroid injections¹¹
- Low complications^{5-6,11}
- Greater range of motion¹²
- Lower use of analgesics¹¹⁻¹²
- Improved quality of life¹¹⁻¹²
- Short recovery time¹¹

Risks of the RFA procedure

- Sensitivity over skin of the injection site¹³
- Skin infection over the injection site¹³
- Damage to surrounding blood vessels and nerves during needle placement¹³
- Heat damage to structures near the target nerve¹³

Please consult with your doctor for the full list of possible side effects related to the RFA procedure.

Understand what's causing your pain

Contact us to schedule a consultation:

Visit [strykerIVS.com](https://strykerivs.com) to find a practitioner in your area

Interventional Spine

Find bibliographic information online at <https://strykerivs.com/footnotes/rf-patient-brochure>.

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Radiofrequency ablation

Explore alternatives to living with back pain



More than one-third of American adults have low back pain that affects activities of daily living and exercise¹

Radiofrequency ablation can provide long-lasting pain relief.²⁻⁴

Approach back pain with a **therapeutic alternative**

Understanding facet joint pain

Radiofrequency ablation (RFA) or lesioning is a minimally invasive procedure that provides lasting relief to those suffering from lumbar, cervical or thoracic facet joint pain.²⁻⁵ In fact, selected clinical studies show that RFA significantly reduces pain for 6 months or longer in patients.⁵⁻⁶

RFA involves applying heat to certain nerve pathways to “shut off” the transmission of pain signals to the brain. It is performed on an outpatient basis. It can have a high success rate and a low complication rate.⁵⁻⁶

Facet joints are common sources of chronic back and neck pain.⁷⁻⁸ Each vertebral body in your spine has three main points of movement: the intervertebral disc and the two facet points. These facet points are small, stabilizing joints located on either side of each vertebra and consist of bony knobs coated with a slippery cartilage. As a disc thins with aging and from daily wear and tear, the space between two spinal vertebrae shrinks, eroding the cartilage and causing painful friction. Fractures, torn ligaments and disc problems can all cause abnormal movement and alignment, putting extra stress on the facet joints.

Contact your physician if you’re exhibiting any of these lower back symptoms:⁹

- Pain or tenderness in the lower back
- Pain that increases with twisting at the waist or bending backward and extending the lower back
- Pain that moves to the buttocks and hips or the back of the thighs—usually a deep, dull ache
- Stiffness or difficulty with certain movements such as standing up straight or getting up out of a chair

The procedure and **what you can expect**

Before

Your doctor will confirm your diagnosis. If you are a good candidate for RFA, your doctor will ask you for the following information:

- current medications, including herbal supplements and their dosages
- known drug, iodine or latex allergies
- current health conditions

During

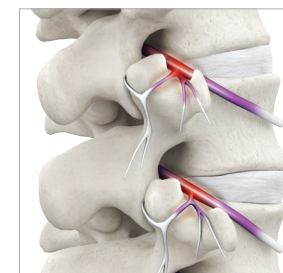
RFA may be performed while you’re awake, but sedated. Your back is numbed with a local anesthetic. Using x-ray imaging, your doctor inserts a needle and electrode and guides them to the treatment area. A high-frequency electrical current then passes through the electrode, heating up and “lesioning” the sensory nerve.¹⁰

After

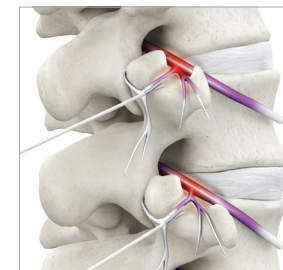
After the procedure, your blood pressure and pulse will be monitored before you go home. You may feel sore or have pain in the treated area, but most people are able to return to work and normal activities within 3 days. Pain relief is typically experienced 1-3 weeks after RFA.¹⁰⁻¹¹ Since nerves can repair themselves, the pain may return. If this happens, talk to your doctor if the procedure can be repeated.¹¹ Please see the **Benefits and risks** section of the brochure for more information.

Procedure **overview**

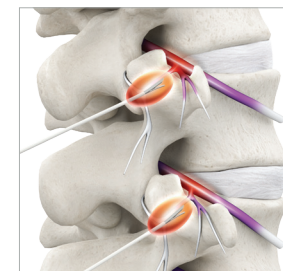
Overview of lumbar RFA procedure¹⁰



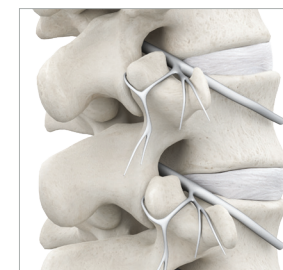
1 Facet joint with inflamed nerve(s)



2 Under X-ray imaging, a needle is guided to the treatment area



3 Radiofrequency current heats surrounding nerve(s) to create lesions



4 Facet joint with treated nerve(s)