Anesthetics that block nerves around the knee relieve pain in patients with knee osteoarthritis

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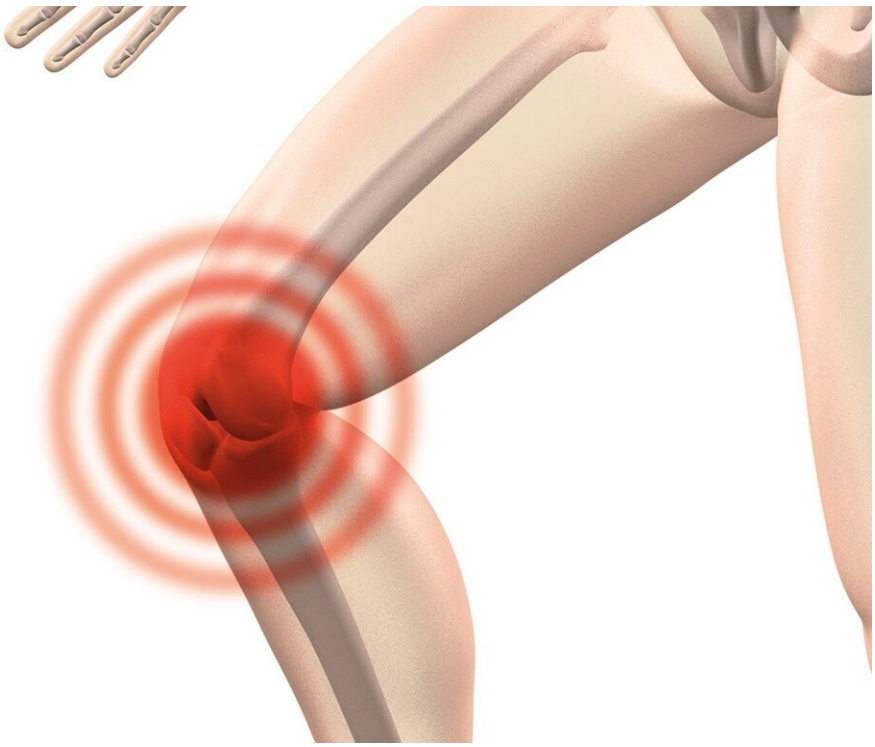

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Results from a recent clinical trial published by Wiley in *Arthritis & Rheumatology* demonstrate that patients with knee osteoarthritis experience short term pain relief from genicular nerve blocks—or

locally injected anesthetics that block nerves around the knee joint.

In the trial, 59 patients were randomized to receive a nerve block or a placebo injection. At baseline and weeks 2, 4, 8 and 12, participants recorded their pain on a scale of 0 to 10.

Patients who received a nerve block reported improvement in pain scores at 2, 4, 8 and 12 weeks, compared with baseline, but with diminishing effects over time. Scores for nerve block versus placebo at baseline, weeks 2, 4, 8 and 12 were: 6.2 versus 5.3, 2.7 versus 4.7, 3.2 versus 5.1, 3.9 versus 4.9, and 4.6 versus 5.1, respectively. Most patients who received the blocks felt they had improved or greatly improved from baseline during the follow up period.

"This study demonstrates that genicular nerve block is an effective short-term therapy for pain management in people with knee osteoarthritis," said corresponding author Ernst M. Shanahan, BMBS, MPH, MHPE, Ph.D., FAFOEM, FRACP, of Flinders University, in Australia. "We think it may be a useful treatment option for this group of people, in particular those waiting for, or wishing to defer surgery."

More information: Ernst M. Shanahan et al, Genicular nerve block for pain management in patients with knee osteoarthritis: A randomised placebo-controlled trial, *Arthritis & Rheumatology* (2022). DOI: 10.1002/art.42384

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