Lumbar Medial Branch Nerve Transection

Understanding Your Risks

This document outlines the potential complications associated with **lumbar medial branch nerve transections**. This is a minimally invasive spine procedure performed through small incisions using specialized instruments and imaging guidance. The medial branch nerves that supply the lumbar facet joints are identified and divided to interrupt pain signals originating from these joints.

The usual purpose of this procedure is to **provide longer-lasting relief of chronic low back pain** believed to arise from the lumbar facet joints, particularly in patients who have experienced temporary but significant pain relief from prior medial branch blocks or radiofrequency ablation.

Risks:

- **Temporary increase in back pain or soreness following the procedure**
- **Incisional pain or bruising**
- **Infection** (superficial or deep)
- **Bleeding or hematoma formation**
- **Nerve irritation or injury, including increased pain, numbness, tingling, or weakness**
- **Neuropathic pain or neuritis**
- **Failure to relieve symptoms or recurrence of pain over time due to nerve regeneration or alternate pain sources**
- **Adjacent segment or compensatory pain**
- **Scar tissue formation**
- **Dural tear with cerebrospinal fluid leak** (rare)

- **Spinal nerve root injury or cauda equina injury** (extremely rare)

- **Medical complications** (deep vein thrombosis, pulmonary embolism, cardiac or pulmonary events—rare)

Risk Factors for Increased Complications:

- **Prior lumbar spine surgery or altered anatomy**

- **Higher number of treated levels**

- **Advanced age and higher ASA class**

- **Medical comorbidities** (diabetes, tobacco use, obesity, osteoporosis, kidney disease)

Patient Acknowledgment:

By signing below, the patient acknowledges understanding of the above risks associated with lumbar medial branch nerve transection and all questions have been answered to the patient's satisfaction.

Patient Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Patient Name: _____ *DOB:*_____