



If chronic pain has moved in— **take action**

Has pain moved in with you like unwanted company? An irritating visitor that shows signs of staying with you—forever?

Eviction is possible!

A procedure, found to be very effective in lessening pain, is offered by Kevin Walker, M.D. of Village Hospital Comprehensive Pain Center.

It is called radiofrequency ablation of nerves, a procedure that may be used to reduce certain kinds of chronic pain by **preventing** the transmission of pain signals. Think of it as a roadblock.

How it works

“It is a procedure in which a portion of nerve tissue is heated to cause an interruption in pain signals and reduce pain in that area, but it does not destroy the nerves,” Walker said.

Many of his patients have struggled with chronic back and/or neck pain for years or even decades.

“In many cases, patients have had back or neck surgeries (in the past) and the pain has returned,” said Walker.

The procedure

Your doctor will first identify the nerve or nerves that are sending pain signals to your brain. You will have a test that numbs specific nerves to help your doctor find the nerves that are causing the pain.

Patients may need X-rays to pinpoint where to direct the radiofrequency probe. After administering a local anesthetic, the doctor places an instrument under the skin through which electrical stimulation heats the surrounding tissue.

This may cause patients to feel a buzzing or tingling sensation. The heat “stuns” the nerves, blocking them from sending pain signals to the brain. The results usually last for around six to nine months because often the nerve tries to grow back.

Benefits

The procedure has many benefits for patients:

- There is no age limit, unlike other pain relief procedures
- There is only local anesthesia or no anesthesia needed
- It only takes 20-30 minutes for most patients to be treated

“My patients appreciate that there is no cutting, and it is done in an outpatient setting,” Walker said.

This technology is also used to treat headaches, facial pain, severe burning in affected areas, as well as back and pelvic joint pain.

Dr. Walker is an anesthesiologist and physician provider of the Village Hospital Comprehensive Pain Center, located in the Medical Office Building in the Village at Pelham. For an appointment, please call 864-849-9350.



What is low back pain?

Low back pain can affect anywhere in the area below the ribs and above the legs. The lower back is the connection between the upper and lower body, and it bears most of the body's weight. Because of these roles, it is easily injured when a person lifts, reaches or twists.

Almost everyone has low back pain at one time or another. The good news is that most low back pain will go away in a few weeks with some basic self-care. But if the pain is severe or lasts more than a couple of weeks, see a doctor.



VILLAGE HOSPITAL

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Featured Events

As part of our commitment to keeping you healthy, active and informed, the Village Hospital offers a wide selection of health education classes, seminars and events. Register today at villageatpelham.com or call 864-849-9470. Programs are held in the Village Hospital Community Center (located within the Medical Office Building), unless otherwise noted.

A HEALTHY BREAKFAST WITH BREE

Saturday, December 17 • 10-11 a.m., breakfast served • *Community Center*
Reigning Miss South Carolina Bree Boyce will host a delicious breakfast for young ladies while sharing her personal struggles with obesity. Bree lost 115 pounds through healthy eating and exercise, giving her real-life experiences to share with girls about a healthy body image and practical tips on a healthy lifestyle. Girls age 12 and up are invited to attend. Moms are also welcome. Register online for this free event.

TWIG & VINE HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, December 8 • 9 a.m.-6 p.m. • *Twig & Vine, inside the Village Hospital*
Join us at our gift shop's holiday open house. The Twig & Vine will feature lovely gifts, jewelry and books, all with special discounts. Refreshments served all day.

DIABETES SELF-MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

Wednesday, December 21 • 9 a.m.-4 p.m. • *Community Center*
Diabetes affects every organ in your body, so that means learning as much as you can about how to control it. Join Carolina's Center for Diabetes and Endocrinology to gain the skills you need to accomplish this. You must have a physician referral to participate and insurance will be filed for program cost. Participants receive a free blood glucose meter and diabetes reference book. Please contact Erica Moore at 864-560-6465 for more information and to register.

A NEW YOU: OPTIONS IN SURGICAL WEIGHT LOSS

Tuesday, January 17 • 6:30-7:30 p.m. • *Community Center*
Jason Johnson, D.O., of Spartanburg Regional Weight Loss Services will discuss the types of surgical weight loss available: sleeve gastrectomy, LapBand® and Roux-en-Y gastric bypass. Bring your questions and concerns and learn more about achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. Register online for this free event.

DIABETES SELF-MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

Wednesday, January 18 • 9 a.m.-4 p.m. • *Community Center*
Diabetes affects every organ in your body, so that means learning as much as you can about how to control it. Join Carolina's Center for Diabetes and Endocrinology to gain the skills you need to accomplish this. You must have a physician referral to participate and insurance will be filed for program cost. Participants receive a free blood glucose meter and diabetes reference book. Please contact Erica Moore at 864-560-6465 for more information and to register.

BONES AND JOINTS 101

Tuesday, January 31 • 12-1 p.m. lunch served
6:30 -7:30 pm desserts and coffee served • *Community Center*
Join Frank Armocida, M.D., of Village Orthopaedic Surgery as he discusses basics: how bones, joints, muscles and ligaments work; what orthopaedic surgeons do and when you need to see one. Register online for either of these free events.

MIND-BODY SKILLS GROUP

Thursdays, January 5-February 23 • 2-4 p.m. • *Community Center*
The Mind-Body Skills Group is an eight-week program to learn the scientific basis for mind-body medicine, while experiencing the power of the small group approach. Participants learn to use a range of the most effective tools for self-care and stress management. Tuition for the course is \$300 and financial assistance is available for those who qualify. The facilitator is John Simmons, M.D., certified in Mind-Body Medicine. Please call 560-1981 to register.

Community Health Talk

Toni Conner, R.N. | community resource nurse,
the Village Hospital



The holidays and the New Year are upon us. Now is time to enjoy the holiday season and make plans for 2012. If you are like me, the holidays are loaded with temptation to eat the wrong foods and slack off on exercise. While that may be tempting, I am determined not to do that this year—my health is just too important, and I hope you feel the same.

To help us keep our focus, Miss South Carolina, Bree Boyce, is making a visit here in December. Girls age 12 and up are invited, as well as their moms.

Bree's platform is "Eating Healthy and Fighting Obesity," which fits right in with what we promote here at the Village Hospital. At age 17, Boyce weighed 234 lbs. Her doctor diagnosed her excessive weight as the source of her knee problems and warned that she would have more health problems in the future unless she lost weight. Through healthy eating and exercise, Boyce lost 110 lbs. over three years and won Miss South Carolina 2011.

Bree will be here for "Breakfast with Bree" on Saturday, December 17 at 10 a.m., then on to Atlantic City for the Miss America pageant on January 14, 2012. Join us and be inspired (pre-registration is required).

In the New Year, we will continue offering classes to help you better understand your health and to promote wellness. If you have never been to one of our free health education classes, I invite you to join us in 2012. If you are one of our "regulars," I look forward to seeing you again. I know you will find the classes interesting and, hopefully, we can help you achieve those New Year's resolutions that you are making.

I wish you all happy, healthy holidays and a wonderful 2012.