

# PLAN A BLOCKS **Popliteal Level Sciatic Nerve**

**INDICATIONS:** Leg, foot & ankle surgical anaesthesia & analgesia

**TARGET:** Sciatic nerve (ScN) or branches; common peroneal nerve (CPN) & tibial (TN)

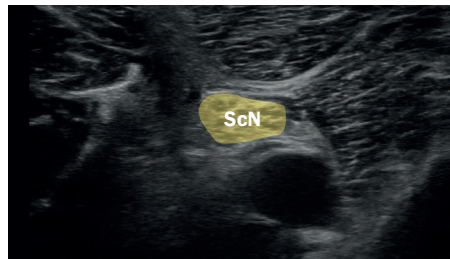
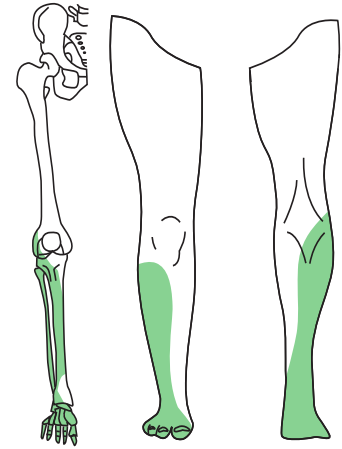
**LOCAL:** ≤20 ml plus local for skin

## KIT

- PPE (droplet precautions)
- Sterile gloves
- Linear US probe + cover
- Sterile gel
- 0.5% chlorhexidine
- LA for skin (+ syringe/needle)
- 80 mm 22G block needle
- 20 ml syringe for LA

## PRE-PROCEDURE

- Assistant, monitoring (ECG, SpO<sub>2</sub>, BP) & IV access
- USS machine on opposite side to operator
- Aseptic skin prep (allow to dry)
- Patient in lateral position facing US machine, operator behind patient (alternative positions include patient supine with leg elevated, or patient prone)



## SCANNING

- US probe transverse across posterior thigh (just proximal to popliteal skin crease)
- Identify popliteal artery & scan proximally to view ScN (superficial to artery & between/deep to hamstring muscles)
- Angle probe distally to optimise view of nerve(s)
- Scan proximally & distally to identify point ScN divides into CPN & TN

## STOP BEFORE YOU BLOCK

(Follow Prep, Stop, Block)

- LA to skin
- Block needle in plane (lateral to medial) through single skin puncture, deep to biceps femoris tendon
- Withdraw & reposition needle if paraesthesia
- Deposit ≤20 ml LA within circumneural sheath
- Inject deep to nerve initially, then superficial
- Low-pressure injection (<15 cmH<sub>2</sub>O), stop if LA spread not seen
- Aspirate every 5 ml & every needle reposition

## EXAMPLE TIMINGS

- 0.5% levobupivacaine (toxic dose 2 mg/Kg)
- Surgical block achieved in 45 min
- Surgical anaesthesia for 4+ hr
- Analgesia 12+ hr post block

## POST-PROCEDURE

- Monitor for minimum 30 min (as per AoA Standards of Monitoring)
- Test block after 10 min (sensation & motor)
- Document procedure, extent of block & post-block care

## TESTING THE BLOCK

NERVE	SENSORY	MOTOR
TN	Sole of foot	Plantarflexion foot & great toe
CPN	Dorsum of foot	Eversion of foot
	Site of surgery	



## REFERENCES

Barron et al (2020) RA-UK Plan A Blocks Poster – Lower Limb  
 Bowness et al (2021) International consensus on anatomical structures to identify on ultrasound for the performance of basic blocks in ultrasound-guided regional anaesthesia  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/rapm-2021-103004>  
 Haslam et al (2021) Prep, stop, block': refreshing 'stop before you block' with new national guidance.  
<https://www.ra-uk.org/index.php/prep-stop-block>

Created by

Nick Record, James Lloyd, Owen Lewis, James Bowness, Alasdair Taylor

Contact

✉ [james.bowness@jesus.ox.ac.uk](mailto:james.bowness@jesus.ox.ac.uk) & [alasdair.taylor2@nhs.scot](mailto:alasdair.taylor2@nhs.scot) ■ [bowness\\_james](#)



Endorsed by the  
European Society  
of Regional  
Anaesthesia  
& Pain Therapy



**INTELLIGENT  
ULTRASOUND**  
for smarter scanning