

Manchikanti L, Singh V, et al . Lumbar Facet Joint Nerve Blocks in Managing Chronic Facet Joint Pain: One-Year Follow-up of a Randomized, Double-Blind Controlled Trial: Clinical Trial NCT00355914. Pain Physician 2008;11:121-132.

Manchikanti L, Singh V, et al. Evaluation of Lumbar Facet Joint Nerve Blocks in Managing Chronic Low Back Pain: A Randomized, Double-Blind, Controlled Trial with a 2-Year Follow-Up. Int J Med Sci 2010,7.

Reasons for not submitting as evidence: The 2010 article is a follow-up of the 2008 randomized trial of facet nerve injections in which both groups received injections of active agents; the comparison was between local anesthetic versus local anesthetic plus bupivacaine. This comparison is not helpful in determining the presence of an effect of either active injection. The results are suggestive of a therapeutic effect of facet nerve blocks, but until there is better evidence of the superiority of active over inactive injections, neither injection is convincingly shown to provide pain relief in the population being studied.

The treatments appeared to require fairly frequent repetition, with 3 or 4 treatments over the course of a year, lasting about 15 weeks per injection. The need for frequent repeat injections is an issue which affects the practical value of the described interventions.