

## CONTRAINDICATIONS, COMPLICATIONS AND DANGERS OF NERVE AND JOINT BLOCKING

Complications can also include cellulitis, moderate soft tissue swelling or a local wound. The most common complications associated with diagnostic nerve blocks are swelling at the site of injection, either in response to the substance or due to haematoma formation. Rare complications include infection of the tissue (perineural), infection of the synovial structure (intrasynovial), peripheral neuropathy (cubital and shoulder joint anaesthesia) and bent or broken needles.

Most horses tolerate nerve blocking well, but some horses' reactions to the placement of needles makes it impossible to perform. Blocking can be very dangerous, especially in the hindlimb or in unpredictable or nervous horses; the safety of the vet and owner is paramount in this situation. Adequate restraint by a competent handler is essential. In some cases, diagnostic anaesthesia is simply too dangerous to perform, in which case other methods of lameness diagnosis will need to be implemented.