



PrepCheck

Pre-block time-out for peripheral nerve blocks

What is PrepCheck?

PrepCheck is a pre-block time-out, a safety check to prevent wrong side nerve blocks.

- ✓ Designed to address human factors and as an alternative process to “Stop Before You Block”.
- ✓ For use in busy clinical environments, where the risk of human error is high.

Why use PrepCheck?

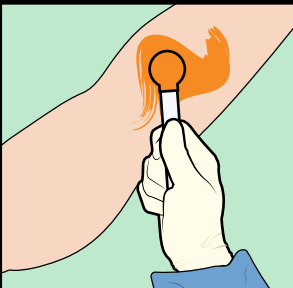
Simple and intuitive process to ensure the correct site/site is checked from the start.

- ✓ Designed to improve communication, teamwork, and wider staff engagement.
- ✓ Compatible with existing theatre checklists and causing minimal disruption to workflow.

How is PrepCheck performed?

PrepCheck is a three-step process that links the actions of skin PREP and block CHECK.

- Application of sterile skin prep for the block prompts the Blocker to lead a two-person check of site and side.
- Linking these two actions builds the block check into the workflow, making it difficult to skip this essential step.

Step 1 Hold the PREP	 ➔ Blocker holds skin prep, assigns an Assistant, and says “Let’s do a PrepCheck”. ✓ Creates a momentary pause, prompting communication and teamwork. ✓ Acts as an obvious visual and verbal clue to the wider team.
Step 2 Block CHECK	 ➔ Blocker and Assistant check Patient ID (and patient if awake), Surgical Consent and Surgical Mark. ✓ Acts as the formal two-person check of block site/side against sources of truth. ✓ Blocker maintains responsibility for leading process and applying skin prep throughout.
Step 3 PREP the Skin	 ➔ Blocker applies sterile skin prep to the block site/side and completes nerve block. ✓ Acts as a physical and mental commitment to specific block site/side, Blocker unlikely to insert block needle elsewhere. ✓ PrepCheck should be repeated if any delay completing block, distraction away from block area, new block or patient position change.

Who developed PrepCheck?

PrepCheck was developed by regional-anaesthesia specialists at South Metropolitan Health Service WA.

- In response to a series of wrong side blocks where wrong side skin prep, distractions and forgetting to do a formal block check were implicated.
- Previous processes had delayed the formal block check until final needle insertion (“needle-in-hand”), allowing wrong side skin prep, risking task fixation and timing the block check at a moment of high cognitive load (after ultrasound scanning).
- Following a successful pilot, PrepCheck has been adopted across a number of Perth public hospitals.



Scan here

or visit **fsfhg.health.wa.gov.au/PrepCheck** for more resources and information

To find out more, contact your departmental Regional Anaesthesia Lead.