

Ulnar Nerve Block (Figure 3.68)

Quantity of Local Anesthetic: 10 to 12 mL

Needle Size: 1-1/2 inch, 20 to 22 gauge

Injection Technique: The ulnar nerve is anesthetized approximately four inches (10 cm) proximal to the accessory carpal bone on the caudal aspect of the forearm. Careful palpation will reveal a groove between the flexor carpi ulnaris and ulnaris lateralis muscles. A 1-1/2-inch, 20-gauge needle is inserted through the skin and fascia perpendicular to the limb. Although the depth of this nerve varies, it is usually about 1/4 to 1/2 inch (1 to 1.5 cm) below the skin surface. The local anesthetic (10 to 12 mL) is infused both superficially and deeply in this region. The ulna block will partially desensitize the accessory carpal bone and surrounding structures, palmar carpal region, carpal canal, proximal metacarpus, superficial digital flexor tendon (SDFT), and suspensory ligament.

Pitfalls:

1. Injecting too proximally or distally on the limb
2. Injecting the anesthetic too superficially
3. Difficulty in assessing success of the block