



LUMBAR EPIDURAL STEROID INJECTION

Reasons for procedure: Your doctor has requested this procedure because you have back and/or leg pain. The purpose of this procedure is to provide temporary pain relief. Although this goal is usually achieved, it is impossible to guarantee that your pain will be decreased. The period of relief is different in each patient.

Description of procedure: The procedure takes about 10 minutes. As you lie on your stomach on a soft cushion, your skin will be cleansed with an antiseptic soap, then numbed with a local anesthetic. Using fluoroscopy (continuous x-ray), a needle will be directed into the space that surrounds the nerves and spinal fluid inside the spinal canal, called the epidural space, at or near the level that is believed to be causing your pain. A very small amount of contrast dye will be injected to confirm correct needle position in the epidural space. The medications will then be injected. The medication is usually a potent long acting steroid to decrease inflammation, and a shorter acting numbing medicine to help with your pain. During the injection, you may feel mild pressure or tingling in your back or legs. These sensations are normal and will only last a few seconds. The steroid may take 1-2 days to begin its anti-inflammatory action, and it reaches its maximum effectiveness in 5 to 7 days. The duration of relief depends on many factors, including the severity and reversibility of your condition.

After the procedure: You will be asked to lie quietly and your vital signs will be monitored for a short period. You will receive discharge instructions and asked not to drive for the next several hours. The short-acting anesthetic can make your legs feel numb or weak for 4 to 5 hours and you may be at risk for a fall. You should minimize activity during this time, and then resume routine light activities as tolerated. Avoid any strenuous activity or heavy lifting for 24 hours.

Risks associated with this procedure: Complications are infrequent but possible. The needle could cause local bleeding or infection, these are both rare. Other complications include: allergic reaction to the x-ray dye or anesthetic medication, damage to the nerves, and temporary leg weakness. Pain may be temporarily worsened after the procedure. There is a small risk of CSF leak if the thecal sac is inadvertently punctured, which could result in a "spinal headache".

IMPORTANT:

- Please call us 24 hours ahead of time if you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment: (615) 771-8274.
- Please bring your most recent MRI or CT scans of your spine to the procedure if possible.
- If your symptoms are mild, do not take pain medications before the procedure.
- If you answer "Yes" to any of the following questions, please notify us prior to the procedure.
 - * Are you allergic to contrast/x-ray dye (contains iodine)?
 - * Do you have diabetes?
 - * Do you take Coumadin or other blood thinners?
 - * Are you being treated for an infection?
 - * Are you, or could you possibly be pregnant?

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO ASK. THANK YOU