

Epidural Steroid Injection

What is an Epidural Steroid injection?

Epidural steroid injection is a common treatment option for back, leg, neck and arm pain. The goal of the injection is to reduce inflammation resulting in pain relief. At times the injection alone is sufficient to provide relief, but commonly an epidural steroid injection is used in combination with physical therapy.

How is the procedure done?

You will be lying on an X-ray table with a small pillow under your stomach to slightly curve your back. Blood pressure, heart rate and breathing are monitored. The injection site is cleaned and then numbed with a local anesthetic similar to what a dentist uses.

Your physician will insert a needle into the skin under fluoroscopy (X-ray) guidance and direct the needle towards the epidural space. After the needle placement is confirmed using contrast, steroid is then injected into the epidural space. This procedure takes approximately 15 minutes.

How long does pain relief last?

Pain relief may last weeks, months or years. It may take up to 2 weeks to see the effect of the steroid.

What are the Side Effects and Complications?

Side effects and complications are uncommon. Potential side effects and complications include:

- Headaches
- Infection
- Bleeding
- Increased pain
- Allergic reaction to medication

If you have diabetes, the steroid can cause elevation in your blood sugar level. You should check your blood sugar more often during the first week after an epidural steroid injection. Please talk with your provider who helps to manage your diabetes if your blood sugar is elevated.

How should I prepare myself for this procedure?

A driver is required to you give a ride home after the procedure. If you are on any blood thinners, please call the clinic at 701-551-6980 to receive instructions about your medication.

When should I call my doctor?

You should call us immediately if any of the following occur:

- If you experience any swelling, redness, or drainage from the site of the injection
- If you have a fever greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- If you experience a new numbness or weakness in your arms or legs
- If you experience any problems controlling your bladder or bowel