

Adult Neurology

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Epidural Steroid Injections

An epidural steroid injection is the injection of a small amount of steroid (a cortisone-type of medication) into the epidural space in the back. The epidural space is an area located within the spine, but outside the spinal cord.

An epidural steroid injection is performed for back pain which can be caused by herniated disc or spinal stenosis (narrowing of the spinal space). All of these conditions may cause irritation of the nerves, which in turn may cause you pain.

What happens during the procedure?

You may be sitting, lying on your side or lying face down. Your back will be cleansed with an antiseptic solution and your skin will be numbed. The doctor will place the needle into the epidural space and a saline/steroid solution will be injected. Fluoroscopy (x-ray) may be used to guide the placement of the needle, especially if you have had back surgery in the past. The needle may not be placed in exactly the same site as your pain. The medicine injected will "float" to coat nearby nerves.

- ❖ You may feel some pressure at the site of injection and occasionally your pain symptoms may intensify briefly with the injection. The doctor will inject slowly in order to decrease your discomfort.
- ❖ You may experience warmth, tingling and/or numbness for a brief period of time following the injection.
- ❖ There are times when headaches can follow an epidural - Let us know if this becomes a problem.

The procedure takes less than 20 minutes.

Contraindications for the procedure:

Bleeding problems and infection at the site of injection are possible contraindications. Please call your doctor as soon as possible if you have any bleeding disorders, or if you have a fever, cold, the flu or any other infection.

Special care afterward:

A Band-aid will be applied to the injection site. You will remain in the Recovery area for a short time where someone will check your blood pressure, pulse and respirations and review your discharge instructions. Then you will be able to go home. It is recommended to have someone drive you if it is your first injection.