

Pain Solutions

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Epidural Steroid Injections



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An epidural steroid injection, often referred to as a nerve block, is a minimally invasive procedure to help treat pain caused by inflamed spinal nerves. The medication from the injection travels through the epidural space calming the painful nerves.

What is an epidural steroid injection?

The medication used in an epidural steroid injection usually includes both a local anesthetic and a steroid. The medicine is delivered directly into the epidural space of the spine. This can reduce inflammation causing a reduction or elimination of the pain caused by the inflamed nerve root.

Who is a candidate?

Patients who suffer from:

- Neck pain
- Arm pain
- Sciatica or radicular pain
- Low back pain
- Osteoarthritis of the spine
- Leg pain

What happens during treatment?

The epidural steroid injection procedure is quick and simple. It typically takes 15-30 minutes followed by a recovery period. Patients will remain awake during this procedure, but will be given local anesthetic to numb the skin before the injection is given. With the aid of a fluoroscope the physician will direct a needle through the skin into the epidural space where they will deposit small amounts of long-lasting steroids. Some discomfort occurs but patients typically feel more pressure than pain. The epidural steroid injection specifically targets the inflamed area minimizing exposure of the rest of the body to the steroids.

What happens after treatment?

The majority of patients can walk around immediately after the procedure and typically resume full activity the following day. In order to ensure safety it is required that you have someone to drive you home. Patients typically resume full activity the day after their procedure. There may be soreness around the injection site that can be relieved by using ice and a mild analgesic such as Tylenol. It can take several days for pain relief to occur as the steroids gradually reduce inflammation.

How long does it last?

Some patients receive relief from one injection, while others need up to three. The benefits of an epidural steroid injection can last anywhere from days to years. The goal is to reduce pain so you can resume normal activities and a physical therapy program. Some patients get immediate and lasting relief from the first injection, while others require a full series of 3 injections before the maximum benefits are realized.

