

Care After an Epidural Steroid Injection

Your Procedure

An epidural steroid injection is a treatment to relieve pain by reducing swelling and inflammation using a medicine called a steroid.

During the injection, you received a small dose of a steroid medicine and anesthetic in the epidural space in your back. This space is found outside of the spinal canal. It contains the nerves that cause pain.

What to Expect After Your Procedure

- It may take several days for you to feel pain relief. The injection can provide pain relief for days, weeks or months. You may need more than one visit. Injections are usually given 3 to 4 months apart.
- You may feel some tingling or numbness in your legs and feet or your arms and hands. This is temporary.
- The anesthetic in the injection will help reduce your pain for 2 to 6 hours. After that, your back, leg or arm pain may return until the steroid takes effect. (This may take up to 2 weeks.)
- You may notice the following side effects from the steroid medicine:
 - feeling jittery
 - having a flushed face
 - having increased blood glucose.
If you have diabetes, call the health care provider who manages your diabetes with questions or concerns.

Your Health Care Provider

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Activity

- Have someone drive you home.
- You should have someone stay with you or be available to help you for 12 hours after the procedure.
- Rest for 24 hours.
- Do not return to work until tomorrow.
- Avoid any heavy activity or lifting for the first 24 hours.
- Avoid sitting in one position for more than 3 or 4 hours at a time.
- You may take a shower or bath 24 hours after the procedure.
- After 24 hours you may return to your normal activities as you are able.
- Do not swim, or sit in a hot tub for 1 week.

Pain Relief

- Take any prescribed medicine (including pain medicine) as directed.
- Follow your health care provider's instructions for managing your pain.

(over)

- Use a cold pack to help relieve discomfort.
 - Place a clean, dry towel on your skin before you place the ice pack at the injection site.
 - Leave the cold pack on for 20 minutes at a time, once every 2 hours for the first 24 hours.

Food and Beverages

- Return to your normal diet. Follow any instructions your health care provider gave you.
- Do not drink alcohol while you are taking prescription pain medicine.

Site Care

- Bandages were placed over the injection site after the procedure.
- After 24 hours you may remove the bandages from the injection site.
- It is important to keep the site clean and dry.

Headache

- If you have a severe headache or if the headache gets better when you lie flat, you will need to rest flat in bed. Call your health care provider or the facility where you had the procedure. You may need to return for a headache treatment.

When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you have any of the following:

- swelling, drainage, redness or warmth at the injection site
- numbness, tingling or weakness that does not go away
- new or worse pain
- headache that lasts longer than 12 hours or gets worse when you stand
- changes in bowel or bladder habits
- chills or a temperature of 101 F or higher
- any new symptoms
- any questions or concerns.