

Epidural Steroid Injections

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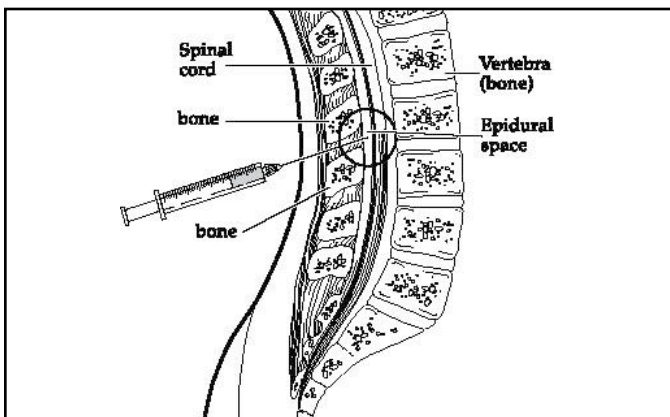
An epidural steroid injection is a treatment to relieve pain by reducing swelling and inflammation using a medicine called a steroid.

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

It may take several days for you to feel relief. The injection can provide pain relief for days, weeks or months. (You may need more than one visit.)

The procedure takes 30 minutes. Plan to spend 1 to 2 hours at the hospital or clinic.

Precaution: You cannot have an injection if you are ill, have a temperature higher than 101 F, or if you are taking antibiotics. Also, you must not have any vaccines (immunizations) within 2 weeks of the procedure.



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The injection enters the epidural space in your spinal column.

Your Appointment

Location: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____ a.m. / p.m.

Plan to spend at least ____ minutes / hours at the facility.

Phone number: _____

If you need to cancel or reschedule, call at least 24 hours before your scheduled appointment.

What To Tell Your Health Care Provider

Tell your health care provider if you:

- have any allergies to medicine
- have had a contrast reaction
- are breastfeeding, pregnant or think you may be pregnant
- take a blood thinner, such as warfarin (Jantoven®)
- have diabetes (Ask for an early morning appointment and talk to your health care provider about your medicine needs.)
- take any other medicines. Check with your health care provider to see if you have special medicine instructions.

(over)

Before the Procedure

- Please make arrangements to have someone drive you home. You will not be able to drive. It is important that someone stay with you or be available to help you for 12 hours after the procedure.
- If you had spine X-rays or other imaging tests done at a different facility, please arrange to have them sent to the hospital or clinic where you are having the procedure.
- You may eat and drink as usual and take your regular medicines unless your health care provider gave you other instructions.
- Bring a list of your current medicines with you to the procedure. Include all prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins, herbal or natural products.
- Follow any instructions your health care provider gave you.
- Wear loose clothing.

During the Procedure

- You may be asked to describe your pain on a scale of zero to 10.
- You will lie on your stomach on the X-ray table.
- The health care provider will mark the exact spot on your back for the injection.
- Your skin is numbed with an anesthetic (medicine).
- The health care provider will carefully insert the needle into your epidural space to inject the steroid. You will be asked not to move while the needle is being inserted. This is important.
- Tell the health care provider if you feel pain in your back or down your arm or leg during the injection.

After the Procedure

- You may feel some tingling or numbness in your legs and feet or arms and hands. This is temporary.
- You will be monitored in a recovery area for 1 hour to see if the injection has relieved your pain and to check for side effects. You will then be able to go home.
- Have someone drive you home.
- Avoid any strenuous activity or heavy lifting for the first 24 hours.
- The anesthetic in the injection will help relieve your pain for 2 to 6 hours. After that, your back, leg or arm pain may return until the steroid starts working. (This may take up to 2 weeks.)
- Return to your regular diet and medicines. Follow any instructions your health care provider gave you.

Follow-up Results

- Your health care provider will receive the exam results. He or she will either talk with you about the results or mail you the results.