

Epidural Injection



Why use this treatment?

There are several common conditions that can cause severe acute or chronic spinal pain and/or arm/leg pain from nerve irritation. Some of these conditions include:

- Disc herniation - the inner part of the disc pushes through its outer ring and into the spinal canal, putting pressure on the spinal cord and nerves.
- Degenerative disc disease - collapse of the disc space puts pressure on nerves in the back.
- Spinal stenosis – a narrowing of the spinal canal that puts pressure on the nerves and the spinal cord and causes significant pain.

How does an epidural injection work?

An epidural injection delivers steroids and local anesthetic directly into the epidural space in the spine. The injection is given to reduce inflammation and provide pain relief for anywhere from several days to several months. Occasionally, an injection may provide permanent relief.

What are the risks of an epidural injection?

This procedure is safe. However, with any procedure there are risks, side effects, and the possibility of complications. The most common side effect is temporary weakness or numbness which will last until the local anesthetic wears off. Other risks involve bleeding, infection, dural puncture that may result in a headache and injection into blood vessels and surrounding organs. While extremely rare, as with any invasive procedure, the risks of paralysis and death are possible.

After your procedure:

Immediately after the injection, you may notice that your pain may be gone or considerably less. This is due to the effect of the local anesthetic and usually lasts only for a few hours. Your pain may return and you may have some soreness at the injection site for several days. You may notice some pain relief initially, but it may take up to 14 days to receive the full effect of the injection.

You were given a number of medications during your procedure, including sedatives, steroid medication, local anesthetic. Any of these medications can sometimes cause temporary drowsiness, forgetfulness, numbness, weakness or soreness. For your safety, it is important that you:

- Rest for a few hours after the procedure. Walk with assistance as long as

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you are having any numbness, weakness or drowsiness.

- Do not drive or operate heavy machinery or power tools for at least 12 hours.
- Do not make any important decisions for 12–24 hours after the procedure.
- Resume your regular activity slowly. Do not overdo!
- You may eat your regular diet.
- Take your regular medication. If you are diabetic, contact your family doctor if your blood sugar readings are higher than usual.
- Use ice packs at the injection site for the next 24 hours. Don't leave the ice on for longer than 20 minutes at a time.
- Use heat only according to the instructions that you were given.

Notify us if:

- There is a major change in pain level or if your pain pattern is different.
- You develop chills or a fever over 101⁰F in the next 3 days.
- There is any abnormal bleeding or drainage from the injection site.
- Please call the office during business hours whenever possible.
- You can reach the answering service at (616) 776-9643 after the office is closed.
- Report to the nearest hospital emergency department if you are unable to contact Javery Pain Institute.

Patient Signature

Date

Clinical Witness

Date