



Kuether Brain and Spine

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Epidural Steroid Injection Procedure Information

Your doctor has recommended that you have an epidural steroid injection.

Before the procedure

You will be given specific instructions from the doctor prior to coming in for the injection. You will meet with a doctor who will review the risks and benefits of the procedure and answer any questions you may have. Typically, you can eat a small meal several hours prior to the injection. You can continue your normal medications with the exception of any blood thinners or anti-inflammatory medications. Please be sure to discuss all medications you are taking with the doctor when scheduling the injection to discuss the possibility of discontinuing any of them prior to the procedure.

Epidural Steroid Injection Procedure

- You will be fully awake during the procedure, lying face down.
- If you have diabetes, your blood sugar numbers may increase. Your primary care physician or our staff will counsel you regarding management. Bring your diabetes medication with you so you can take it after the procedure.
- Continue to take all medications, **especially blood pressure medications**. Bring all your medications with you so you can take them as needed after the procedure. Both your blood sugar and blood pressure will need to be within a safe range on the day of the procedure.

After the area is prepared and fully numb, Dr. Kuether will insert the needle through the skin toward the spine. Once the needle is in the proper space a small amount of dye may be injected to verify the proper position of the needle on the X-Ray. Then, the mixture of numbing medication and steroid is injected in the epidural space. Next, the needle is then removed and a band-aid is placed over the injection site. The procedure takes approximately 10-30 minutes.

After the Procedure

- In the recovery room you will rest, lying down, for 15-30 minutes.
- A nurse will check your blood pressure and pulse. The nurse will also discuss your discharge instructions with you.
- Pain relief may begin immediately after the medication has been injected. You may experience a brief recurrence of your former pain until the anti-inflammatory medicine takes effect. Apply ice to the injection site to decrease discomfort.
- Some people may experience numbness or an inability to walk for a brief time after the procedure. If this occurs, a wheelchair can be provided to assist you to your car. These symptoms gradually wear off by the end of the day.

Discharge Information:

- Do not drive or operate machinery for at least 24 hours after the procedure
- You may eat your normal diet.
- Do not participate in strenuous activity that day – get some rest.
- You may remove any bandages the morning following the injection.
- You may take a shower. Do not take a bath or sit in a hot tub for 24 hours
- If you are taking a blood thinner like aspirin Plavix, Ticlid, Coumadin, Heparin, Lovenox, or others, you may re-start it.

When to Seek Medical Care

You should seek medical care after an epidural injection if you develop any of the symptoms described above including:

- A headache or dizziness
- Increased pain
- Numbness or tingling more than 24 hours
- Trouble breathing
- Skin reaction

Follow-up

The doctor will call to follow-up after the epidural steroid injection. This will likely be between two and six weeks after the injection to determine how you have responded to the injection and if you have any continued symptoms from the nerve compression. If

you continue to have symptoms or if the symptoms return after a period of time you may consider having the injection repeated. Dr. Kuether recommends no more than 3-4 injections in a year.