



COMPREHENSIVE SPINAL CARE
CONNECTICUT BACK CENTER

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EPIDURAL STEROID INJECTION (ESI)

WHAT IS AN EPIDURAL STEROID INJECTION?

The provider has suggested that you have an ESI to help reduce pain and improve function. This procedure can help relieve pain by reducing inflammation (swelling and irritation). The epidural space is the space around the sheath (dura) covering the spinal nerves. An ESI is a combination of corticosteroid with a local anesthetic pain relief medicine injected into the epidural space.

PRIOR TO THE PROCEDURE

At your last appointment, the provider discussed the reasons for an ESI. If you have any questions regarding the following instructions please call the office 5 days prior to your scheduled injection.

- Provide a list of any allergies you may have to medicines, latex or contrast dye.
- Provide a list of medicines you take. You will be asked to stop any blood thinning products (**Aleve, aspirin, Advil & Ibuprofen**) 3-5 days prior to the procedure, and **Coumadin, Plavix, Xarelto or Pradaxa**, 7-10 days prior, or consult with your prescribing Doctor on their recommendations.
- Have someone available to drive you home after the procedure.
- If your health changes (cold, flu or other illness), please call and let us know. It may be necessary to reschedule your appointment.
- **YOU ARE ALLOWED TO TAKE TYLENOL PRODUCTS FOR PAIN RELIEF**

HOW IT WORKS

An epidural steroid injection (ESI) is a combination of corticosteroid with a local anesthetic pain relief medicine. Corticosteroids are strong anti-inflammatory medicines used to relieve pain. The local anesthetic medicine gives you immediate pain relief. Corticosteroid medicines take longer to have an effect. It can take a few days, even a week or longer, for the steroid medicine to reduce inflammation and pain.

DURING THE INJECTION

Your positioning is important to make the injection go smoothly with the least discomfort to you. Please wear loose-fitting clothes with an elastic waistband (sweatpants) to ensure your comfort. You will be placed on the table with a pillow under your stomach and arms out in front of you. The Doctor will determine the placement of the injection. A local anesthetic for numbing (lidocaine) is injected, followed by the ESI. Contrast dye may be injected to confirm the correct placement of the needle. The entire procedure is usually brief - about 10 minutes.

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AFTER THE INJECTION

- You will be asked to sit in a recliner in a recovery room for 10-15 minutes immediately following the injection.
- You should have someone drive you home.
- You may put ice packs on the injection site for 10-20 minutes at a time every 2-3 hours. ***Be careful not to burn your skin with the ice - place a towel between the ice and your skin.***
- You should plan to relax the day of the injection, but usually can resume normal daily activities within 24 hours.
- You can usually start or resume your individualized exercise program or physical therapy program within one week of your injection.

SIDE EFFECTS

Side effects which may occur, but go away in a few days, include:

- Briefly increased pain
- Back and/or neck tenderness
- Dizziness
- Trouble sleeping
- Hiccups
- Headaches along with flushing of the face
- Agitation

If you experience any of the following, please contact us immediately:

- Severe pain or headache
- Fever or chills
- Loss of bladder control
- Progressive weakness
- Redness or swelling around the injection site

If you are diabetic, please test your blood sugars an extra 4 times a day for 3 days. Contact your treating physician if they remain elevated.