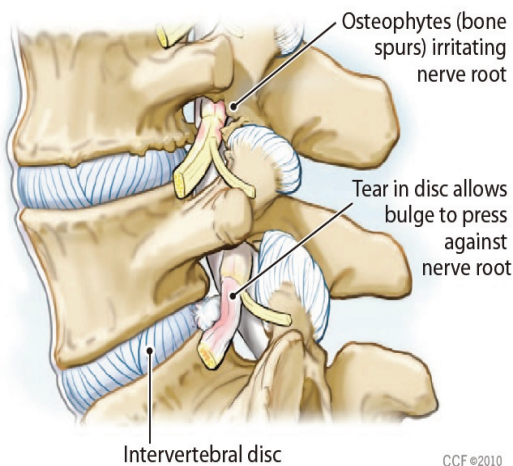


Epidural Steroid Injection

What is an epidural steroid injection?

An epidural steroid injection (ESI) is an injection of a small amount of steroid (anti-inflammatory) into the lower back to help relieve pain in the your lower back and legs. The medication is injected, using a fluoroscope (X-ray machine) into the area of fatty tissue that surrounds the spinal nerves called the epidural space. The goal of the injection is to decrease the inflammation, reducing your level of pain. An epidural can be used as a method of treatment as well as a



way to help a surgeon diagnose a specific nerve root that may be causing your pain.

The spinal cord runs within the bony structure of the vertebral column and is encased by the dural sac. This sac contains spinal fluid that bathes the spinal cord. The epidural space is the space between the outer surface of the dural sac and the bones of the vertebral column. Nerves from the legs enter the vertebral column and pierce the dural sac to reach the spinal cord. For various reasons, these nerves can become irritated and cause pain in the legs.

What are steroids?

Steroids are medication that help reduce pain and inflammation and are used to treat many painful conditions. Many different types of steroids exist. The steroid that is injected is a synthetic drug similar to the natural hormone that is produced in your body.

How to prepare before the procedure

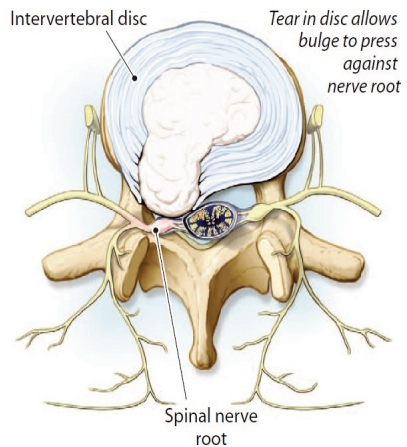
You will have a consultation with the doctor to determine if you are a candidate for the injection. They will review the risks and benefits of the planned procedure. At this consultation, any questions you have may be answered. Common potential side effects of an ESI include, but are not limited to:

- Infection
- Bleeding
- Headache
- Facial flushing
- Temporary leg weakness
- Temporary increase in pain

You must let your doctor know if you have any bleeding disorders or are using any blood thinners.

These include but are not limited to:

- Aspirin
- Coumadin (Warfarin)
- Plavix (Clopidogrel)
- Ticlid (Ticlopidine)
- Heparin
- Lovenox (Enoxaparin)
- Fragmin (Dalteparin)
- Aggrenox (Depyridamole)
- Effient (Prasugrel)
- Pradaxa (Dabigatran)
- NSAIDS (Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Diclofenac, Ketorolac, Meloxicam, Celebrex, Piroxicam etc)
- Herbal remedies or Vitamins



If you are unsure if a medication thins your blood, please call your physician to ask. A clearance will be necessary from your primary care physician or cardiologist prior to having the injection, to ensure your safety prior to stopping any medications. You will then be instructed on when to stop the medication prior to the injection.

You must let your doctor know if you have had any fevers, are on antibiotics, had any recent hospitalizations or infections within the last 4 weeks.

The day of the procedure

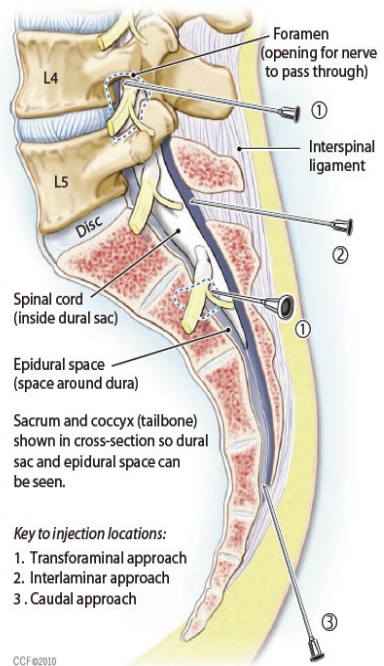
- You have the option of sedation during your procedure. Regardless, you will be monitored by an anesthesiologist/nurse anesthetist during your procedure.
- If you chose to receive sedation, you will be asked to fast for at least 8 hours prior to the procedure. You will also be required to have someone drive you home.
- If you are diabetic, we will check your blood sugar levels on the day of your procedure, as your blood sugars may increase.
- An IV will be started on all patients and necessary paperwork will be signed. The site of injection will then be confirmed with the doctor.

During the procedure

- You will be asked to position yourself on an x-ray table. A local anesthetic will be injected into the skin and underlying tissues to decrease the discomfort of the epidural needle.
- Once the local anesthetic is working, the epidural needle is advanced into the epidural space, using bones as landmarks and an x-ray machine (fluoroscope) to ensure that the needle is in the right place.
- When the needle is in the epidural space, a syringe containing contrast dye is injected to confirm proper location. Once confirmed, the steroid solution is injected.

After the procedure

- A bandage will be placed over the injection site.
- The procedure itself will take 5-10 minutes and you will be monitored in recovery for at least an additional 15 minutes
- A nurse will check your vitals and discuss your discharge instructions.
- Pain relief may take anywhere from 2 days to 2 weeks to take effect. You may continue to experience pain until the medication takes effect.



Discharge instructions

- Do not drive or operate machinery for at least 24 hours
- You may resume a normal diet
- Do not participate in any strenuous activity during the day of the injection
- You may shower, but do not take a bath or sit in a hot tub for at least 24 hours
- If taking blood thinners, you may restart them that night or the following morning.

Please call the office 516.536.2800 if you develop fever, chills or any new symptoms.



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