Epidural injection

PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET INT04

Your appointment:

Date: .....

Time: .....

Location: .....

Please see our website for more clinic details.

Duration of examination

The procedure will take approximately 30 minutes plus post-procedure care.

Please bring with you:

- Your request form
- Medicare and any
- Healthcare cards

Payment on the day of the examination is requested.

For more information regarding Benson Radiology please visit:

bensonradiology.com.au

What is an epidural injection?

A common cause of sciatic pain is an inflammatory response to nerve irritation by a disc protrusion or nerve entrapment. An injection of steroids (anti-inflammatory medication) into the epidural space can act to decrease this inflammation, thus decreasing pain.

Patient preparation

You will need to fast for two hours prior to the procedure.

Please let us know if you have any allergies or you take blood-thinning medication (Aspirin, Warfarin, Dabigatran or Clopidogrel). You may need to have a blood-clotting test before the procedure and have your medication adjusted by your doctor.

What will happen during the examination?

You will be asked to change into a gown. The procedure is normally performed with you lying face down on the CT examination table. Your skin will be cleansed in the area of interest to create sterile conditions. A local anaesthetic is then injected. CT imaging is used to accurately locate the area that requires injection and to guide the needle. It is important you keep as still as possible during the procedure.

A radiologist will position a needle using the CT guidance within the epidural space and inject the steroid and sterile saline or local anaesthetic. The needle is removed and a sterile dressing applied.

Are there any risks?

You will receive a small dose of x-ray radiation. **However, please advise the radiographer if you are, or think you may be pregnant.**

Bleeding, though rare, can occur into the epidural space, causing pressure. This may require an operation to treat.

Infection into the epidural space, which is rare, can also occur.

If the fluid sac around the nerves is punctured, this can lead to a fluid leak that results in a headache. This usually settles over a few days with bed rest and analgesia. Only rarely does this require further treatment.

Spinal cord injury with transient or permanent paralysis is very rare.

Allergy is considered to be rare.

After the examination

You may experience some soreness or bruising at the needle site and rarely, some minor muscle spasm. You may also experience some temporary numbness at the injection site and down your leg. A temporary increase in back pain may be felt.

You will be kept for observation for up to 30 minutes. If you are then feeling comfortable you may leave.

You will require someone to drive you home after the procedure. Please consider this when making your appointment.

We request you do not perform any lifting or physical activities that may aggravate your condition for at least 12 hours after the procedure.

Please turn

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Effects from the treatment

The local anaesthetic may give temporary relief from pain for up to four hours. Paracetamol may be taken if you experience discomfort. The steroid can take up to a week to reach its maximum effect. Relief from symptoms does vary between patients, both in time and scale.

Some people do not receive pain relief from the procedure if inflammation is not the main cause for their pain. Please keep in mind this is generally not a failure of the procedure. This information is useful for your doctor as it indicates other causes of pain that may need to be considered.

It is important you understand why and how we will be assisting you. If you have any questions, please call one of our clinics or speak to our staff on the day of your visit.

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