



An epidural steroid injection is given to relieve pain in your neck, back or extremities that is caused by the irritation or swelling of a nerve root. This procedure involves injecting a steroid and numbing medicine (anesthetic) into the epidural space. The epidural space is the space between the outer covering of your spinal cord and the bones that form your backbone (vertebrae).

**LET YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER KNOW ABOUT:**

- Any allergies you have.
- All medicines you are taking including vitamins, herbs, eye drops, creams and over-the-counter medicines such as aspirin.
- Previous problems you or members of your family have had with the use of anesthetics.
- Any blood disorders or blood clotting disorders you have.
- Previous surgeries you have had.
- Medical conditions you have.

**RISKS AND COMPLICATIONS**

- Headache
- Bleeding
- Infection
- Allergic reaction to the medicines
- Damage to your nerves

**BEFORE THE PROCEDURE**

- Ask your health care provider about changing or stopping your regular medicines. You may be advised to stop taking blood-thinning medicines a few days before the procedure.
- You may be given medicines to reduce anxiety.
- Arrange for someone to take you home after the procedure. This is not required but is a personal preference.

**PROCEDURE**

- You will remain awake during the procedure. You may receive medicine to relax you.
- You will be asked to lie on your stomach.
- The injection site will be cleaned.
- The injection site will be numbed with a local anesthetic.
- A needle will be injected through your skin into the epidural space.
- Your health care provider will use an X-ray machine to ensure that the steroid is delivered closest to the affected nerve. You may have minimal discomfort at this time.
- Once the needle is in the right position, the local anesthetic and the steroid will be injected into the epidural space.
- The needle will then be removed and a bandage will be applied to the injection site.

**AFTER THE PROCEDURE**

- You may be monitored for a short time before you go home.
- You may feel weakness or numbness in your arm or leg, which disappears within hours.
- You will be allowed to eat, drink and take your regular medicine.
- You may have soreness at the site of the injection.
- You may not submerge your body in water (bathtub, pool, hot tub) for up to 48 hours after the procedure.
- You should limit aggressive physical activity for up to 48 hours after the procedure.