

GENERAL PRE/POST INSTRUCTIONS

◆ **EATING:** You may **NOT** have anything to eat or drink **after midnight on the night prior to your procedure.**

◆ **MEDICATIONS:** The nurse from the surgery center will discuss taking your routine medications the day of your procedure with you during your preoperative phone call. You may take your regular pain medicine as needed before/after the procedure. If you are taking blood thinning medications like, **Coumadin, Heparin, Lovenox, Plavix, Pradaxa, Xarelta or Ticlid**, they will have to be stopped before the procedure. However, **DO NOT STOP TAKING** these until discussing it with our office.

◆ **THINGS THAT MAY DELAY THE PROCEDURE:** If you are on antibiotics, or if you have an active infection or fever, please contact our office, we may need to reschedule the procedure.



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**Epidural
Injection**

EPIDURAL INJECTION

WHAT IS AN EPIDURAL INJECTION AND WHY IS IT HELPFUL?

An epidural injection places anti-inflammatory medication into the epidural space to stop inflammation of the nerve roots, therefore, hopefully reducing the pain in the affected area. The epidural injection may help to improve the injury by reducing inflammation. It usually reduces pain and improves function within 3-7 days. It may provide permanent relief or provide a period of pain relief that will allow other treatments like physical therapy to be more effective.

WHAT IS THE EPIDURAL SPACE?

The covering over the nerve roots in the spine is called the dura. The space surrounding the dura is the epidural space. This space is commonly used to deliver medications to the spine. Nerves travel through the epidural space before they travel to your arms or legs. The nerves leave the spine from small nerve openings. These nerve roots may become inflamed due to irritation from a damaged disc or contact with bone spurs. Swelling of these nerve roots may cause pain in your neck, including your shoulders or arms, and in your low back, including your buttocks and legs.

BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE:

If you are a candidate, your doctor will ask you for the following information:

Recent x-rays, MRI films and reports.

Drug, iodine, x-ray dye, or latex allergies.

Current health conditions.

Your physician will also request that you:

STOP taking blood thinning medications such as aspirin, herbal remedies, Ibuprofen and any other anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) 7 days prior to procedure. (See attached)

A nurse from the facility will contact you 24-72 hours prior to your procedure with further instructions.

**** Please be on time for your scheduled procedure****

****Cancellation less than 48 hours in advance, or failure to arrive on your procedure date, may result in a facility charge****

YOU MUST ARRANGE FOR SOMEONE TO DRIVE YOU HOME AFTER THE PROCEDURE.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME DURING THE PROCEDURE?

An epidural injection takes about 30 minutes. To begin, your physician will inject local anesthetic to numb the area. Using x-ray guidance, a small needle is inserted into the epidural space. Your physician will then inject contrast dye to confirm that the medicine spreads to the affected nerve root(s) in the epidural space. After confirmation of placement, the physician will inject a combination of numbing medication and an anti-inflammatory steroid medication.

FOLLOWING THE PROCEDURE

Typically patients go home within 30-60 minutes after the procedure. It may be beneficial to repeat the procedure in about two weeks. A series of injections (up to 3 injections 1-2 weeks apart) often proves more helpful than a single injection.