

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE INJECTION?

CONTINUED....

You may experience some soreness or bruising at the needle site. Pain relief may be immediate but this may wear off temporarily and then return. A temporary increase in back pain may also occur. More often, pain relief develops over a period of days. The day after the procedure, the pain may be worse, requiring increased medication before responding. Relief from symptoms does vary between patients, both in time and scale.

We recommend you do not perform any heavy lifting or physical activity that may aggravate your pain for the first 24 hours following the injection.

WHERE CAN I HAVE AN EPIDURAL INJECTION?

HOLLYWOOD PRIVATE HOSPITAL

115 Monash Avenue, Nedlands
T: 9449 5800 Fax: 9389 8112

MURDOCH

St John of God Medical Clinic
100 Murdoch Drive, Murdoch
(entrance off Barry Marshall Parade)
T: 9333 9200 F: 9333 9286

SUBIACO

St John of God Subiaco Hospital
12 Salvado Road, Subiaco
T: 9286 6400 Fax: 9286 6481

YOUR GUIDE TO

EPIDURAL INJECTIONS



WHAT IS AN EPIDURAL INJECTION?

An Epidural Injection (EI) is the introduction of local anaesthetic and/or steroid into the spine in the space around the sac containing the spinal nerve roots. This is usually requested because of narrowing of the spinal canal, inflammation in this space or disc disease, in order to help manage your back or sciatic pain.

Steroids have a strong anti-inflammatory effect and hence, reduce pain over a period of time. This treatment may result in permanent remission of symptoms but more often the effect is temporary, over weeks or months. However, a positive result confirms the diagnosis, and then other treatments may be applicable.

PATIENT PREPARATION

There is no specific preparation. You will need to bring any x-rays or scans that you have.

Please inform us if you have any allergies or take any medication that thins the blood, such as Warfarin or Plavix, as this may need to be adjusted by your doctor prior to the Epidural Injection.

You are not able to drive yourself home after this procedure. Therefore, you must organise a driver to bring you in and pick you up after the procedure.

The procedure itself will take approximately 30 minutes. However, with preparation and recovery times, you may be in the Radiology department for up to 2 hours.

You will be asked to change into a gown. You will be given a consent form to read and sign prior to the procedure which outlines what to expect and risks associated with this procedure. A member of staff will explain the procedure in detail. If you have any concerns or queries, please let the staff member looking after you know.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE EPIDURAL INJECTION PROCEDURE?

On admission to the department, you will be interviewed by nursing staff.

The procedure is normally performed lying face down on the CT examination table. The skin on your back will be cleaned with an antiseptic solution. The Radiologist will localise the appropriate site for the injection and will inject local anaesthetic into the area. This may sting slightly for a short time.

It is important that you remain as still as possible during the procedure.

A needle is then directed into the spinal epidural space using CT or x-ray control. The position of the needle tip is checked with an injection of contrast (x-ray dye) or air. The local anaesthetic and/or steroid is then injected.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE INJECTION?

You will be kept for observation for approximately one hour after the injection at which time you may be discharged if you are comfortable.

The local anaesthetic may cause numbness in your leg, similar to the facial numbness which occurs after a dental anaesthetic. This effect may make it difficult to walk comfortably for a period of up to a few hours. Usually this sensation is present immediately and if it has not developed after half an hour, it will not at all. We like to keep you resting until normal sensation returns.

Occasionally, there may also be difficulty in passing water if the bladder overfills because there is a loss of sensation for a few hours in the lower abdomen.