

Epidural Steroid Injection Discharge Instructions

Follow up:

_____ Please schedule a follow-up appointment with your Surgeon's office in _____ weeks.

Adam Michalik, DO 952-456-7777 Daytime Hours

_____ A follow up appointment is not required at this time. Please contact your Surgeon's office at the number above if you experience complications at home after this procedure.

Adam Michalik, DO 651-439-8807 Evening/Weekend Hours

If you have questions after reading this information, call the health care provider who ordered your injections.

WHY GET A SPINAL INJECTION?

Injections are done to identify areas in your back that cause you pain, to relieve pain or for both reasons. Your health care provider decides where to do the injections. This decision is based in part on your report of your pain. X-rays are used to guide the injections. Epidural space: This space is just outside your spinal cord. This injection is commonly done for pain in the arms and legs, as well as the back. It also is done during childbirth.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW AFTER THE PROCEDURE?

Every person responds in a different way to this procedure. You may have the following conditions, which may begin within an hour of the injection and last up to four hours:

- Numbness, tingling or weakness in your arms or legs.
- Dizziness or light-headedness.

If these conditions persist longer than four hours, contact your health care team.

YOUR RISK FOR FALLING IS HIGH

In addition to your usual leg numbness or weakness, the medications injected today may make you unsteady on your feet. It can be easy to fall and hurt yourself when your legs feel numb, weak or unsteady. You may feel this way for a few hours after the injections. A fall could cause you to break a bone or cause serious injury to your back.

Do what you can to avoid falling

- After the injection, do not try to change your clothes without the help of a nurse.

- Be careful when you step on and off curbs, climb stairs and walk. Have someone help you until you feel better able to do these actions alone.
- Have someone remove any clutter and rugs from your floors, especially in the walkways.
- Wear shoes with low heels until you can walk steady again.

DISCOMFORT OR PAIN

After the local anesthetic wears off, your usual pain may return for a few days until you feel the anti-inflammatory effect of the corticosteroid. **It may be about two weeks after the injection before you feel the greatest pain relief.** You may have pain relief for a short period of time, a few weeks, a few months, or longer. For some people, these injections do not lower pain. Spine pain often is hard to sort out. Some people need more than one injection to find the source of the pain or to get relief from the pain.

FOR THE FIRST 24 HOURS

- The injected area may be numb and the site may be sore.
- Use covered ice packs to help with any discomfort or pain you feel. Do not leave an ice pack on for more than 20 minutes at a time.
- Do not put heat on the injected area. Heat may make you feel worse and may reduce the relief you could get from the injection.

FOR THE FIRST 3 TO 7 DAYS

- The corticosteroid medication should begin to lower your pain. **It is possible for the pain to feel worse before it begins to feel better.**
- Rest the injection area and use pain medication as needed. Note: Some common pain relievers can thin your blood. This may not be good for some people. Ask your health care provider what you should take for pain.
- You may get a bruise at the injection site.

ACTIVITY

- You must limit your activities for a while after this injection.

For the rest of the day:

- Do not drive.
- Do not do any difficult or strenuous physical activities.
- Do not provide care for anyone who depends on your help.

For the first 7 to 10 days:

- You may do mild activities. Ask your health care provider what you may try to do.
- If you feel like your pain may be returning: Reduce your activity and do less for a few days. Slowly work back to doing more activity again.

Bathing:

For the first 48 hours:

- You may shower. But do not soak the injection site in water for a long time. This means do not swim, take a bath or use hot tubs.

COMMON SIDE EFFECTS

For a few days after your injection you may:

- Have “hot flashes” and a red, flushed look on your face.
- Feel very alert or “revved up” and sleep less.
- Have both positive and negative moods (mood swings).

If you have diabetes, your blood glucose may rise for a few days after your injection. Check your blood glucose more often to make sure it does not stay high. If your blood glucose does not return to your usual range after a few days, tell your primary health care provider. If you have questions about your blood glucose, call the health care provider who manages your diabetes.

WHEN SHOULD YOU GET MEDICAL CARE?

Problems related to injections do not happen very often. Call your health care provider if you have:

- Increased pain that goes down your leg or arm.
- Headache or Dizziness that does not improve after 24 hours.

SIGNS OF AN INFECTION

- A temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) or higher.
- An injection site that becomes red, swollen, tender, or warm.
- Fluid that drains from the injection site.
- An odor from the injection site.