

Epidural Steroid Injections



WHAT ARE EPIDURAL STEROID INJECTIONS (ESI)?

An epidural injection is the delivery of powerful anti-inflammatory medicine directly into the space outside of the spinal cord, known as the epidural space. Medications like steroids, local anesthetics, and opioids can be injected alone or in combination.

An ESI will not cure or correct the preexisting medical condition causing the pain (i.e., spinal stenosis, herniated or bulging disc, arthritis, etc.), but it may reduce the level of pain for days to years.



HOW DOES IT WORK?

The epidural space allows unique access to the spinal cord and nerve roots at every level of the spine. Epidural injections are a safe, low-risk way to deliver a variety of medications directly to the nervous system. Once delivered into the epidural space, these medications may block pain impulses, stabilize irritated nerve structures, reduce swelling, and reverse the inflammatory changes that take place within the nervous system when pain persists. It is not unusual for someone to need more than one injection to experience long-term benefits.

WHO IS A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR EPIDURAL INJECTIONS?

People with pain in the neck, arm, low back, or leg (sciatica) may benefit from ESI. Studies have shown that epidural therapy may also be effective in treating the following painful conditions:

- Intervertebral disc injury
- Acute herpes zoster
- Postherpetic neuralgia
- Complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS)
- Cervicogenic headaches
- Radicular pain in pregnancy
- Cancer pain
- Post-surgical pain

Epidural therapy can also be used with other noninvasive treatments to help rehabilitation efforts and allow you to participate more fully in physical therapy.

WHAT TO EXPECT?

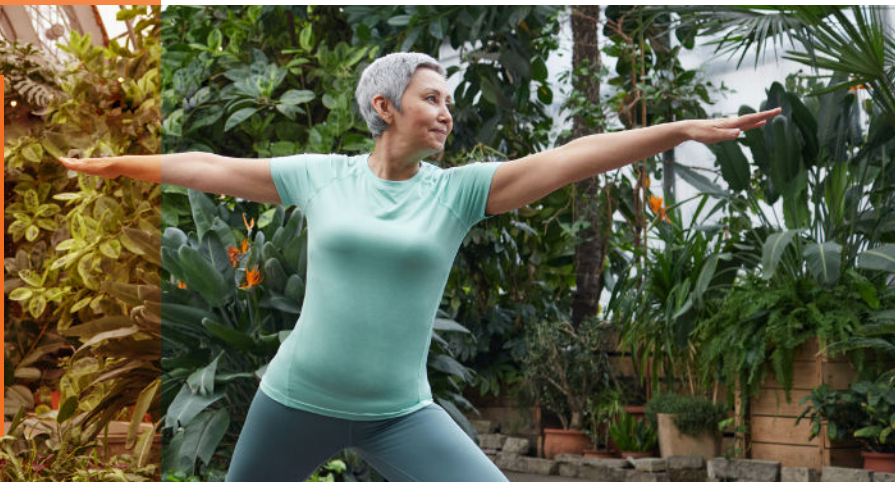
- 1 One of our pain specialists will evaluate you to see if you are a good candidate for epidural injections. If your condition is deemed appropriate, a series of injections are typically recommended. In some cases, injections may be done during your first visit if prior authorization arrangements have been made with your insurer.
- 2 Our team will provide guidelines to help you prepare for your first appointment. Injections are administered under medical supervision in our surgery center. Our doctors are board-certified in anesthesiology and your comfort during procedures is of prime importance. We have a full range of anesthesia options including local anesthesia, IV conscious sedation and MAC anesthesia.
- 3 Before the procedure, you may be asked to change into a surgical gown to help make the injections easier. All of our epidural injections are image-guided and performed while you rest comfortably on your stomach.
- 4 The procedure may take up to 15 minutes. Some people experience tingling or a mild burning sensation as the medication enters the epidural space. This discomfort usually disappears within a few minutes after the injection is completed.
- 5 After the procedure, you will be monitored in our post-operation area until you are cleared by our team to go home. While the local anesthetic usually provides immediate pain relief,¹ it may take up to 2 weeks for the steroids to take effect.²

INSURANCE AND BILLING

Insurance companies will typically provide coverage for epidural steroid injections when they're determined to be medically necessary and meet the guidelines outlined in your individual policy.

IMPROVE YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE

Epidural steroid injections are a widely accepted treatment option for pain management and have been used for decades to sufficiently control pain caused by inflammation.



1. Chang, Douglas & Zlomislic, Vinko. (2019). Lumbar spinal injections. Chapman's Comprehensive Orthopaedic Surgery, 4th ed., Chapter 273.
2. Hassan KZ, Sherman AI. Epidural Steroids. [Updt 2022 Jan 2]. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2022 Jan-.