

Epidural Steroid Injections



WHAT ARE EPIDURAL STEROID INJECTIONS (ESI)?

An epidural injection delivers a powerful anti-inflammatory medication directly into the epidural space, the area just outside the spinal cord. Medications like steroids, local anesthetics, and opioids can be injected alone or in combination.

ESIs will not cure or correct the underlying cause of pain (such as spinal stenosis, herniated or bulging discs, arthritis, etc.), but they may reduce the level of pain for days to years.



HOW DOES IT WORK?

The epidural space provides direct access to the spinal cord and nerve roots throughout the spine. Epidural injections are a safe, low-risk way to deliver medication to the nervous system. Once injected 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 relief.

WHO IS A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR EPIDURAL STEROID INJECTIONS?

Individuals experiencing pain in their neck, arm, lower back, or leg (sciatica) may benefit from ESI. Studies have shown that epidural therapy may also be effective in treating the following 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 support rehabilitation efforts and allow you to participate more fully in physical therapy.

WHAT TO EXPECT?

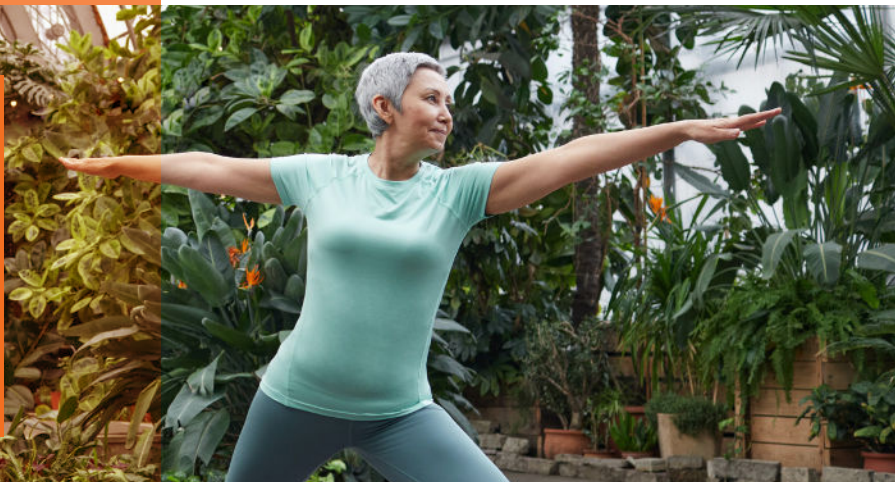
- 1 One of our pain specialists will evaluate you to see if you are a good candidate for epidural injections. If appropriate, a series of injections may be recommended. In some cases, injections may be done during your first visit if prior authorization arrangements have been made with your insurance provider.
- 2 Our team will provide instructions to help you prepare for your procedure. The injections are performed under medical supervision in our same-day surgery center. Our board-certified physicians prioritize your comfort by offering a full range of anesthesia options, including local anesthesia, IV conscious sedation, and monitored anesthesia care (MAC).
- 3 Before the procedure, you may be asked to change into a surgical gown to help make the injections easier. All 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 typically covers epidural steroid injections when they're considered medically necessary and meet the criteria outlined in your 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.