



Lumbar Epidural Injection

A lumbar epidural injection is an outpatient procedure. Before your injection, you'll be asked questions about your health.

Getting Ready

- a) Provide a list of all medicines you take, including aspirin and anti-inflammatories (you may need to stop taking some of them before the injection)
- b) Don't eat 6 hours before or drink anything 4 hours before check in
- c) Arrange for a responsible adult to drive you home afterward
- d) Bring any requested x-ray, CT or MRI images on the day of the procedure

During the Procedure

The injection takes just a few minutes, but extra time is needed to get ready. You may be given medicine before the injection to help you relax.

- a) Monitoring devices may be attached to your chest or side. These devices measure your heart rate, breathing and blood pressure
- b) You'll lie on your stomach or side, depending on where the injection will be given
- c) Your back is cleaned and may be covered with sterile towels
- d) Medicine is given to numb the skin near the injection site
- e) A local anesthetic (for numbing), steroids (for reducing inflammation), or both are injected into the epidural space

After the Procedure

You'll spend up to an hour in a recovery area. You may notice some side effects such as headache, trouble sleeping and briefly increased pain. They should go away in the first few days. When you get home you don't need to stay in bed. In fact, it's best to walk around if you feel up to it. However, avoid activities that may strain your back.

- a) Take walks when you feel up to it
- b) Rest if needed, but get up and move around after sitting for half an hour
- c) Don't exercise vigorously
- d) Don't drive the day of the procedure or until your doctor says it's okay
- e) Return to work or other activities when your doctor says you're ready

Call your doctor right away if you notice any of the following symptoms:

- a) Severe pain or headache
- b) Fever or chills
- c) Loss of bladder or bowel control
- d) Redness or swelling around the injection site

IMPORTANT:

Blood thinners need to be stopped prior to your lumbar epidural injection. Contact the physician who manages your medication to see how many days in advance they'd like you to stop taking it.