

Epidural Steroid Injection: Before Your Procedure

An epidural steroid injection is a shot of steroid medicine in your neck or back.

The shot goes into the space around your spinal cord.

It can help with pain, tingling, or numbness in your neck, arm, back, or leg.

Relief can take a few days, but steroids don't always work.

When they do, the pain relief can last from several days to a few months or longer.

Some people get a series of injections over weeks or months.

Results vary from person to person.

These injections are given in two main places.

Cervical injections go in your neck to help with symptoms in your neck or arm.

Lumbar injections go in your lower back to help with symptoms in your back, buttock, or leg.

Your doctor may use a tiny needle to numb the skin where you are getting the injection.

After the skin is numb, your doctor will use a larger needle for the epidural shot.

They may use X-ray or ultrasound to help guide the needle.

You may feel some pressure during the injection.

But you should not feel pain.

Your injection may also include a numbing medicine that will work right away for a short time.

Bring your photo ID, insurance card, and any paperwork your hospital or clinic may have asked for.

Be sure you have an adult friend or family member to drive you home after the procedure.

Anesthesia and pain medicine will make it unsafe for you to drive or get home on your own.

Make sure that you understand exactly what your doctor wants you to do.

If you take aspirin or some other blood thinner, ask your doctor if you should stop taking it before your procedure.

These medicines increase the risk of bleeding.

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In fact, tell your doctor all the medicines, vitamins, supplements, and herbal remedies you take.

Some may increase the risk of problems during your procedure.

Your doctor will tell you if you should stop taking any of them before the procedure and how soon to do it.

Preparing for an epidural steroid injection can be stressful.

But knowing what to expect and how to prepare can help.

And if you have any questions or concerns, you can always call your doctor.