

Lumbar Epidural Injections

Many people with chronic back and leg pain require **lumbar epidural injections** as a medical treatment. This procedure helps relieve low back and leg pain by reducing inflammation, swelling and irritation of the nerves. This injection is also help the doctor diagnose the source of the pain by numbing certain area of the body.

A lumbar epidural injection won't stop all low back and leg pain. But it reduces the pain intensity and break the pain cycle. This cycle actually begin when back pain makes it hard to move. On the other hand, the lack of movement slows down the healing process. Some people may feel more pain relief from one injection and some people may need more then one injection to get pain relief. The injection can help locate the source of pain as well. Different injections such as **selective nerve block** may numb the roots of specific nerves and therefore relief the pain. The effect of this injection very short lasting, but if it relief the pain, it indicates and locates the source of the pain.

Some people feel more comfortable if they understand their body better before making any decision regarding pain injection procedures.

Vertebrae are the bones that stack up to from the spine.

Disks are “cushions” that provide padding between the vertebrae. A damaged disk can lead to inflammation and pain.

The spinal canal is a tunnel that is formed within the stacked vertebrae. Nerves run through this canal. The nerves are wrapped by a thin layer of tissue.

A nerve root is the part of nerve that leaves the spinal canal. Inflamed nerve roots can lead to back pain.

The sciatic nerve is a nerve that extends down to the leg. When its nerve roots are inflamed, buttock and leg pain often result.

For the pain relief the injection usually has to be performed into epidural space. Epidural space is the area that surrounds the nerves within the spinal canal. To locate the source of the pain **the nerve root** has to be targeted and the medication has to be injected directly onto that nerve root.

A lumbar epidural injection is an outpatient medical procedure. In nova days it usually performs in an outpatient surgery center. The actual injection takes just a few minutes but the preparation for the procedure and post injection recovery take a little longer. All patients vital signs controlling by monitoring devices that attached to the patient and measure the heart rate, blood pressure, EKG and the amount of oxygen in the patient's blood. The injection performs under **fluoroscopy** (x-ray imaging) that helps to guide the injection.

After the procedure the patient needs to be careful and not being too active at the same day. Some patients experienced increase the pain sensation at first but in usually goes away within a few days. An injection to reduce inflammation takes a several days to work. Exercises and good **body mechanics** help keep pain from returning or worsening.

The exercises also help build strength and flexibility. Whether epidural injections were for relieving pain or locating pain it is a right treatment choice for low back and leg pain.