

Lumbar Epidural Steroid Injection

General Post-Operative Instructions for Lumbar Epidural Steroid Injection

This letter is to answer the most common questions and concerns of patients after an epidural steroid injection.

You may resume normal activity as your comfort level allows, but do not engage in any strenuous activity for the first 24 hours after the procedure.

You can return to work 24 hours after your procedure.

You may eat whatever you wish and resume all prior medications.

You have had sedation and you must not drive, drink alcohol, or sign important documents for at least 12 hours.

The majority of patients will feel better sometime within the first one to three days after their procedure. The peak effect of the anti-inflammatory effect from your steroid injection may take as long as one week. It is not uncommon for some people to feel great from the moment they leave the procedure room and/or even for some patients to have slightly more numbness, tingling or pain after their procedure. It is also common for patients who have received more than one epidural injection to have a different experience after every epidural injection.

During your procedure, a x-ray device is used and if there is any rupture of your cerebral spine fluid sac, you will be notified at the time of your procedure to watch out for a spinal headache. If the doctor or the nurse has not instructed you that this has occurred, your risk of developing a spinal headache is far less than 1%.

The most common side effect from the steroid medication is drowsiness from the first day from the anesthesia used or involved in your case. Within the first one to three days, the patient's commonly will get a flushed, red face and a mild headache, which is related to the steroid medication itself. This, again, is not a spinal headache, but should you have any questions, please feel free to contact our office.

Patients who have congestive heart failure or are prone to fluid retention should monitor their weight each day post procedure and call their doctor if they have greater than a three-pound weight gain. If you have glaucoma and experience blurred vision, you should call your ophthalmologist to have your eye pressures checked.

Hiccups and temporary weakness in the legs have been reported to occur, but again are very infrequent. Call your doctor for temperatures greater than 101 degrees.