

Cervical Epidural Steroid Injection



Overview

This injection relieves pain in the neck, shoulders, and arms caused by a pinched nerve (or nerves) in the cervical spine. Conditions such as herniated discs and spinal stenosis can compress nerves, causing inflammation and pain. The medication injected helps decrease the swelling of nerves.

Patient Sedated

The procedure is performed with the patient lying down. Intravenous sedation may be administered, and a region of skin and tissue of the neck is numbed with a local anesthetic delivered through a small needle.

Needle Inserted

Using x-ray guidance (also called fluoroscopy), the physician guides a larger needle to the painful area of the neck. The needle is inserted into the epidural space, which is the region through which spinal nerves travel.

Contrast Dye Injected

Contrast dye is injected into the space to make sure the needle is properly positioned near the irritated nerve or nerves.

Steroid Injected

A combination of an anesthetic and cortisone steroid solution is injected into the epidural space. The steroid is an anti-inflammatory medication. It is absorbed by the inflamed nerves to decrease swelling and relieve pressure. The needle is removed and a small bandage is applied.

End of Procedure

The patient goes to a recovery room and is given food and drink and discharged with post treatment instructions. Some patients may need only one injection, but it may take two or three injections (administered weeks apart) to provide significant pain relief.