

PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET FOR EPIDURAL STEROID INJECTIONS

You have received a lumbar epidural steroid injection. This was carefully injected under the guidance of fluoroscopy to accurately place the steroid medication at the correct spinal level where the nerve compression exists.

Possible side effects or complications from the injection you should be aware of include:

1. **Headache upon sitting or standing up.** This may be from an inadvertent puncture into the spinal fluid space with leakage of spinal fluid. If this occurs, you should immediately lie down for 3 to 4 hours and drink plenty of liquids. If a headache occurs after 3 to 4 hours, you may need to lie flat longer, in some cases up to 24 hours or longer. Please call our office for further instructions.
2. **Some fluid retention.** If this becomes significant or severe, then contact our office for further instructions; you will probably need to see your internist for further evaluation as well.
3. **Increased blood sugar.** If you are a diabetic or borderline diabetic, you may notice a temporary increase in blood sugars, which may be mild to moderate. If this is noticeable, then call our office for further instructions, as well as you internist.
4. **Pain at the site of the injection or down the leg.** This can occur from increased pressure into the spinal canal in an area where pre-existing nerve compression exists. This can be a normal consequence of the injection and not a complication or side effect. This should resolve in 1 or 2 days. If it does not, then call our office.
5. **Numbness of one or both legs.** Call our office immediately for further instructions, but rest assured this nearly always resolves with time and rest.

This information sheet has been prepared for your assurance. We are providing you with as much information as possible regarding possible side effects or complications and your expected course of care after the injection.

You should rest for a few hours, up to one day, and then resume your normal activities.

You may not want to drive home after the injection because of the possibility of leg numbness, which would be dangerous for driving.

Please be patient in your expectation for pain relief. It usually takes 1 or 2 days to begin to experience a significant improvement in your back and leg pains.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Fernyhough, M.D. / Nathaniel A. Lowen, M.D. / Scott Howell, PA-C