

Lumbar Epidural Steroid Injection

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Overview

This injection procedure is performed to relieve low back and radiating leg pain. Steroid medication can reduce the swelling and inflammation caused by spinal conditions.

Patient Positioning

The patient lies face down. A cushion under the stomach area provides comfort and flexes the back. In this position, the spine opens and allows for easier access to the epidural space.

Tissue Anesthetized

A local anesthetic is used to numb the skin. All the tissue down to the surface of the lamina portion of the lumbar vertebra bone is anesthetized. The physician slides a thicker needle through the anesthetized track.

Fluoroscopic Guidance

Using a fluoroscope for guidance, the physician slides the needle toward the epidural space between the L-4 and L-5 vertebra. A contrast solution is injected. The physician uses the fluoroscope to confirm the correct location of the needle tip.

Steroids Injected

A steroid-anesthetics mix is injected into the epidural space, bathing the painful nerve root with soothing medication.

End of Procedure

The needle is removed, and a small bandage is applied to cover the tiny needle surface wound. In some cases it may be necessary to repeat the procedure as many as three times to get the full benefit of the medication. Many patients get significant relief from only one or two injections.

