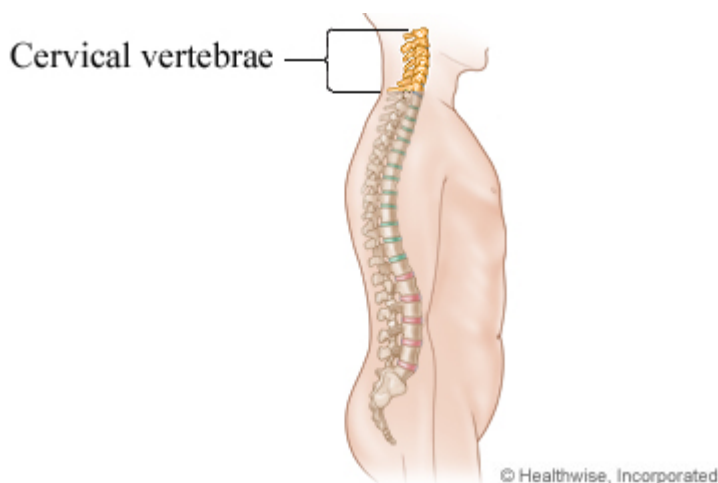


Cervical Epidural Steroid Injection: Before Your Procedure



What is a cervical epidural steroid injection?

A cervical epidural steroid injection is a shot of medicine in your neck. It can help with pain, tingling, or numbness in your neck or down your arm.

The injection goes into the area around the spinal cord in your neck.

The steroid medicine in the shot may help reduce swelling and pain. Steroids don't always work. When they do, it can take a few days. So your injection may also include a numbing medicine. It works right away for a short time.

Some people get a series of these shots over weeks or months.

How do you prepare for the procedure?

Procedures can be stressful. This information will help you understand what you can expect. And it will help you safely prepare for your procedure.



Preparing for the procedure

- Be sure you have someone to take you home. Anesthesia and pain medicine will make it unsafe for you to drive or get home on your own.
- Understand exactly what procedure is planned, along with the risks, benefits, and other options.
- If you take a medicine that prevents blood clots, your doctor may tell you to stop taking it before your procedure. Or your doctor may tell you to keep taking it. (These medicines include aspirin and other blood thinners.) Make sure that you understand exactly what your doctor wants you to do.

- Tell your doctor ALL the medicines, vitamins, supplements, and herbal remedies you take. Some may increase the risk of problems during your procedure. Your doctor will tell you if you should stop taking any of them before the procedure and how soon to do it.
- Make sure your doctor and the hospital have a copy of your advance directive. If you don't have one, you may want to prepare one. It lets others know your health care wishes. It's a good thing to have before any type of surgery or procedure.

What happens on the day of the procedure?

- Your doctor may tell you not to eat or drink for a certain amount of time before the procedure. Follow these instructions carefully.
- Take a bath or shower before you come in for your procedure. Do not apply lotions, perfumes, deodorants, or nail polish.

At the hospital or surgery center



- Bring a picture ID.
- You may get medicine that relaxes you or puts you in a light sleep. The area being worked on will be numb.
- The procedure will take 5 to 15 minutes. You will go home about an hour later.

When should you call your doctor?



- You have questions or concerns.
- You don't understand how to prepare for your procedure.
- You become ill before the procedure (such as fever, flu, or a cold).
- You need to reschedule or have changed your mind about having the procedure.

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