

Lumbar Epidural Steroid Injection

This injection procedure is performed to relieve low back and radiating leg pain. The steroid medication can reduce the swelling and inflammation caused by spinal conditions, such as spinal stenosis, radiculopathy, sciatica and herniated discs. In some cases it may be necessary to repeat the procedure as many as three times to get the full benefit of the medication. However many patients get significant relief from only one or two injections.

POSITIONING THE PATIENT

In this procedure, the patient lays face down. A cushion under the stomach area provides comfort and flexes the back. In this position the spine will open, allowing for easier access to the epidural space. A fluoroscope assists the physician in locating the appropriate lumbar vertebra and nerve root.

STEP 1

A local anesthetic numbs the skin and all the tissue, down to the surface of the lamina portion of the lumbar vertebra bone.

STEP 2

The physician then slides a thicker needle through the anesthetized track. Aided by a fluoroscope, the physician guides the needle toward the epidural space between the L-4 and L-5 vertebral space.

STEP 3

A contrast solution is injected so the physician can use the fluoroscope to see the painful areas and to confirm the correct location of the needle tip.

STEP 4

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

STEP 5

The needle is removed and a band-aid is used to cover the tiny needle surface wound.

