



CHIPPEWA VALLEY
ORTHOPEDICS AND
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LUMBAR EPIDURAL STEROID INJECTION PAIN DIARY

What is lumbar radiculopathy, and why are epidural steroid injections helpful?

Lumbar radiculopathy refers to disease involving the lumbar spinal nerve root. This can manifest as pain, numbness, tingling or weakness in the buttocks, thigh or leg. It is also known as “sciatica”. Lumbar radiculopathy is typically caused by compression or irritation of the spinal nerve roots by either a herniated disc, enlarged facet joint, spinal stenosis or spondylolisthesis.

Epidural steroid injections help to reduce swelling around the nerve root and treat pain radiating into the buttock or leg. Epidural steroid injections can be both diagnostic and therapeutic and serve several purposes. First, by placing numbing medicine around the nerve root, the amount of pain relief you experience will help to diagnose that particular nerve root as a source of your pain. Secondly, the time-release steroid will serve to therapeutically reduce inflammation and alleviate pain. It may take several days for the steroid to quiet down the symptoms. Most patients experience relief in 3 to 5 days but in some cases it may take 1 to 2 weeks for you to notice some benefit. In some cases, you may require up to 3 epidural steroid injections depending on response to treatment.

What should I do before the procedure?

Write down **3 ACTIVITIES** that trigger your pain and include a **PAIN SCORE** (0 to 10)

0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

No pain → Mild Pain → Moderate Pain → Severe Pain → Very Severe → Worst Pain

ACTIVITY	PRE-PROCEDURES PAIN LEVEL
1.	
2.	
3.	

What should I do after the procedure?

It is very important for you to fill out a pain diary after the epidural steroid injection so that I can determine how much relief you have had from the injection. Based on the results from the epidural steroid injection, we will then determine whether or not the nerve root is the source of your pain.

Please record the **SAME ACTIVITIES** you listed above and record the **PAIN SCORE** while doing these activities at the times listed **POST-PROCEDURE**.

ACTIVITY	15 MIN	1 HOUR	2 HOURS	1 DAY	3 DAYS
1.					
2.					
3.					