

This document will give you information about an epidural injection for chronic pain relief. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is an epidural injection?

An epidural injection involves injecting local anaesthetics and steroids into an area called the epidural space, near your spinal cord. This numbs your nerves to provide pain relief. The steroids reduce inflammation and may make the pain relief last longer.

What types of epidural injection are available?

The type of epidural injection depends on where it is given (see figure 1).

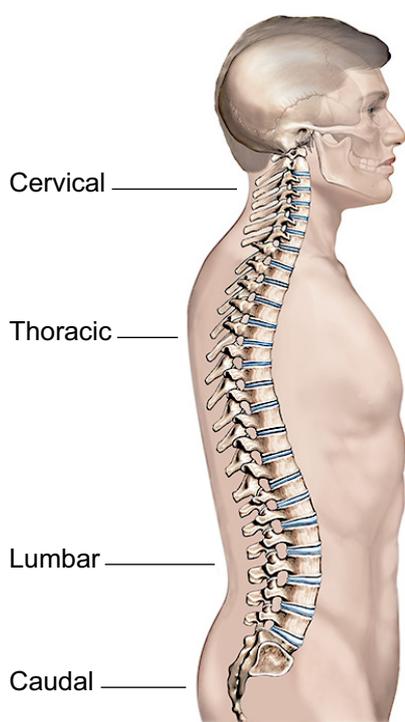


Figure 1
Different types of epidural injection

What are the benefits of an epidural injection?

An epidural injection can give you short-term pain relief, allowing you to move around more easily.

What does the procedure involve?

An epidural injection usually takes 15 to 30 minutes.

Your doctor will insert a needle and inject the anaesthetic. Your doctor will then remove the needle.

What complications can happen?

- Failure of the epidural
- Worsening pain
- Low blood pressure
- Headache
- Backache
- Temporary leg or arm weakness
- Seizures
- Difficulty passing urine
- Unexpected high block
- Infection around your spine
- Nerve injury
- Blood clot around your spine

Summary

An epidural injection can be used for most people, usually giving a safe and effective form of pain relief.

Acknowledgements

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