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Epidural/Facet/RFA Injections

Pre-Procedure Instructions:

Please pay close attention to the following information/instructions:

If you are currently on antibiotics or being treated for an infection, please call the office prior to your injection appointment.

1. You have been scheduled for an epidural steroid injection which is useful to treat pain and determine if your pain is coming from the spinal nerves.
2. You will be receiving an injection of local anesthetic, corticosteroids, and a small amount of contrast dye. Please inform us if you have had any previous adverse reactions to the above-listed medications.
3. The local anesthetic effect can last for several hours after your injection, and you may experience temporary numbness or weakness. We advise that you refrain from driving the day of your procedure. Please bring a driver to your appointment or arrange for someone to pick you up from your appointment.
4. If you take routine medications, you may take these on the day of your injection as scheduled.
5. If you have anxiety about your scheduled office procedure, a light oral sedative (Valium) will be prescribed to your local pharmacy to take before your appointment. Please notify our office at least 24 hours in advance if your pharmacy has not received the prescription. If you have taken the oral sedative, you **MUST** have a driver pre and post procedure.
6. If you are on any blood thinning medications (Plavix®, Coumadin®, Aggrenox®, Lovenox®, Xarelto®, aspirin), please notify the scheduler so that we may give you specific instructions about the length of time you need to discontinue these medications. These instructions will vary depending on the type of procedure you are receiving. In general, we follow the guidelines below. Note, you should obtain clearance from your cardiologist, neurologist, or primary care provider before stopping any meds:

- Plavix® – Stop for 7 days prior to appointment
- Coumadin® – Stop 5 days prior to appointment
- Aggrenox® – Stop 7 days prior to appointment.
- Lovenox® – Stop 24 hours prior to appointment.
- Xarelto® – Stop 3 days prior to appointment.
- Aspirin – For cervical injections, stop 7 days prior. No need to stop before lumbar procedures.
- Anti-inflammatory (Motrin®, ibuprofen, Advil®, Aleve®, etc.) – For cervical injections, stop 5 days prior. No need to stop for lumbar procedures.

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Post-Procedure Instructions:

You have received an injection of local anesthetic and corticosteroids. The local anesthetic effect typically last 4–6 hours. It may take 3–7 days for the corticosteroids to reach optimal effect.

Please pay close attention to the following information/instructions:

7. You may not drive for 12 hours after your injection.
8. It is common to experience mild soreness at the injection site(s) for 24–48 hours. Ice is the best remedy. You may apply ice for 20 minutes at a time several times a day as needed.
9. Avoid heat to the injection area for 72 hours. No hot packs, saunas, or steam rooms during this time. A regular shower is OK.
10. You may immediately restart your regular medication regimen, including pain medications, anti-inflammatory, and blood thinners.
11. Please remove the sterile dressing/band-aid tonight or tomorrow morning. Do not leave it on after you have taken a shower or gotten it wet.
12. Corticosteroid side effects can occur after this injection, but they usually resolve after several days. These side effects can include flushing, hot flashes, mild palpitations, insomnia, water retention, feeling anxious/restless, or headaches.
13. While it is extremely rare to get an infection after a spinal procedure, please call the office if you develop any signs of infection. These signs include fevers/chills, severely increased pain, redness at the injections site, or any drainage from the injection site.
14. Remember that the corticosteroid benefit (long-term pain relief) from an injection can take as long as 10 days to occur. You may have a period of slightly increased pain after your injection before the cortisone takes effect.
15. You may resume all of your normal daily activities 24 hours after your injection.
16. It is OK to restart your exercise or physical therapy program as soon as you feel comfortable doing so.
17. You should schedule a follow-up visit in 2–3 weeks to review your response to this injection.