

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### ***What is an epidural steroid injection?***

An epidural steroid injection (ESI) is a therapeutic procedure done to relieve or eliminate pain in patients with spinal degeneration, spinal stenosis and/or disc herniation/protrusion.

### ***Who does the injection?***

A Radiological Associates neuroradiologist will perform the procedure. These are radiologists who have received special training in radiology specific to the spine.

### ***How long does the pain relief last?***

This varies from patient to patient. In some patients, a single injection is sufficient for pain relief. Others may require multiple injections over a period of time. Three injections are the maximum a patient normally receives. In some cases, the patient may not feel relief of symptoms as a result of the injection.

### ***Why does the Epidural injection work?***

In some patients with neck and back disorders, there is an inflammatory process. The steroid acts to reduce the inflammation in this region, resulting in pain relief.

If the inflammatory process is not a major contributor to the source of pain, an epidural injection has limited usefulness.

### ***How is the procedure performed?***

The patient will lie on their stomach on an x-ray table. The region of the back where the procedure takes place will be cleaned prior to the procedure. The radiologist will then place a small needle into the area around the spine.

Under x-ray, the radiologists will inject a small amount of contrast material to confirm the needle placement. Once this has been completed, the radiologist will inject the medicine and remove the needle.

### ***What are some of the side effects or complications from having an Epidural Steroid injection***

There is a small chance of infection or bleeding. If the fluid space around the nerve in the spine is inadvertently entered, there is a small chance of a post procedure headache.

Occasionally, patients may describe pain in the area where the needle was placed, transient headaches or leg weakness which should clear within a few hours. If symptoms persist, please contact your physicians office for further assistance.

### ***How long will the procedure take?***

A patient should plan on being in the room for 30 to 45 minutes. The actual procedure takes between 5 and 15 minutes. If there are no immediate side effects, the patient may be observed post procedure or discharged immediately. This is determined on a case by case basis.

### ***How should I prepare for this procedure?***

Do not eat solid foods for 3 hours prior to the procedure.

Patients should bring a driver.

### ***What type of recovery time should I prepare for?***

Post procedure, patients should avoid strenuous activities.

Do not drive an automobile until at least the next day.

## QUESTIONS?

If you would like to speak to our Interventional Radiology department regarding this procedure, please contact us at (916) 732-7777

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### ***What is a facet injection?***

Facet joints are located on the back of the spine on each side where one vertebra slightly overlaps the adjacent vertebra. They guide and restrict movement of the spine.

### ***What is the sacroiliac joint?***

The sacroiliac joint, also known as the SI joint, is a joint between the pelvis and the spine.

### ***What is a facet/SI joint injection?***

A facet/SI injection is a therapeutic procedure done to relieve or eliminate pain.

### ***Who does the injection?***

A Radiological Associates neuroradiologist will perform the procedure. These are radiologists who have received special training in radiology specific to the spine.

### ***How long does the pain relief last?***

This varies from patient to patient. In some patients, a single injection is sufficient for pain relief. Others may require multiple injections over a period of time. Three injections are the maximum a patient normally receives. In some cases, the patient may not feel relief of symptoms as a result of the injection.

### ***Why does the facet/SI injection work?***

In some patients with neck and back disorders, there is an inflammatory process. The steroid acts to reduce the inflammation in this region, resulting in pain relief.

If the inflammatory process is not a major contributor to the source of pain, a facet/SI injection has limited usefulness.

### ***How is the procedure performed?***

The patient will lie on their stomach on an x-ray table. The region of the back where the procedure takes place will be cleaned prior to the procedure. The radiologist will then place a small needle in the facet/SI joint.

Under x-ray, the radiologists will inject a small amount of contrast material to confirm the needle placement. Once this has been completed, the radiologist will inject the medicine and remove the needle.

### ***What are some of the side effects or complications from having a facet/SI joint injection?***

There is a small chance of infection or bleeding. In some cases, a patient may describe pain around the area of where the needle was placed.

### ***How long will the procedure take?***

A patient should plan on being in the room for 30 to 45 minutes. The actual procedure takes between 5 and 15 minutes. If there are no immediate side effects, the patient may be discharged immediately.

### ***How should I prepare for this procedure?***

Do not eat solid foods for 3 hours prior to the procedure.

### ***What type of recovery time should I prepare for?***

Post procedure, patients should avoid strenuous activities.

## QUESTIONS?

If you would like to speak to our Interventional Radiology department regarding this procedure, please contact us at (916) 732-7777

Radiological Associates of Sacramento is a private radiology practice in Sacramento serving the area since 1917. We are committed to providing the highest quality imaging and the very best care for you and your family.