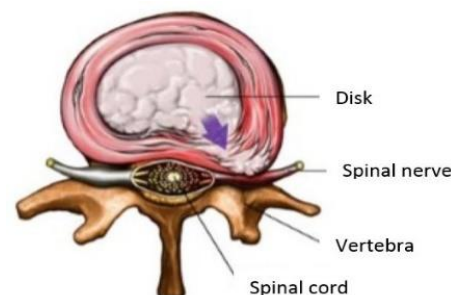


What is a nerve root steroid injection?

Your doctor has recommended a nerve root steroid injection as part of the management of your back pain. Nerve roots are part of the nerves which emerge from the spinal cord. Conditions such as a prolapsed disc can cause inflammation and irritation to the nerve roots. This may result in significant pain in the spine and along the nerves into the legs.

An injection of a mix of steroids (anti-inflammatory) and a long acting local anaesthetic into the area next to the nerve root may relieve pain by decreasing inflammation associated with the irritated nerve. During the procedure when the needle is positioned at this point, patients usually report pain similar to that of their back pain.



Preparation

If you are on blood thinning agents such as Warfarin or Clopidogrel, you will need to see your doctor prior to the procedure as these medications may need to be ceased. A blood test will also need to be completed prior to the procedure to check clotting time.

It is recommended that you arrange for someone to take you home after the injection as a precaution.

Procedure

The procedure involves inserting a needle into the area next to the nerve root. A solution is injected containing the steroid medication and long acting local anaesthetic. The procedure is performed by a Radiologist with CT guidance in the Medical Imaging Department.

Risks of facet joint steroid injection

Risks can include:

Common

- Mild back aches
- Muscle spasm
- Increase in back pain due to the pressure of the fluid injected

Rare

- Permanent nerve damage
- Collection of blood surrounding the nerve root. This could also cause pressure requiring an operation
- Infection
- Allergic reaction

Post Procedure

After the procedure, you will be observed in the Medical Imaging Department for about 30 minutes, after which you are allowed to go home.

You must not perform any activity that will strain your back such as heavy lifting and you are advised not to drive for 24 hours. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact Medical Imaging Reception on (03) 5352 9325 or your doctor.



Integrity



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Learning Culture

EGHS would like to thank our consumers for reviewing this information.

