

Spine Injection Therapy Discharge Instructions

Your care instructions after spine injection therapy will vary based on what type of treatment you received. Please read through these instructions carefully.

Care instructions after an epidural injection

If you received an epidural injection, you received 2 medications in your injection: an **anesthetic** (a numbing medication) and a **steroid** (a medication for pain relief and reducing inflammation).

- The anesthetic will last for a short period of time. During this time, your legs may feel unstable, and you should avoid driving. When the numbing medication wears off, you may feel some pain. Take your normal pain medications to manage your pain. You can also put an ice pack on the injection site for 20 minutes at a time. You may repeat this as necessary, making sure to remove the ice pack after 20 minutes and waiting 1 hour before using the ice pack again.
- The steroid for pain relief may begin to take effect in 3-7 days, and we expect it to reach full effect at 14 days.
- Rest as much as possible during the first 24 hours after your injection.
- Avoid bending, twisting, heavy lifting for the first 24 hours after injection. Do not drive for the rest of the day. Slowly increase your activities after 24 hours.
- Keep the area where you had your injection clean and dry.
- For 48 hours after your injection, avoid baths, hot tubs, swimming, steam rooms, and saunas. You may shower.

- You may go back to eating and drinking normally and taking your prescription medications.

Care instructions after a medial branch block injection

- Be active. Do some activities that would typically cause you pain. This will help us determine if the nerve we injected in the test is the one causing your pain.
- We will give you a pain diary that you will use to record your pain levels. This will help your doctor determine how well the injection worked and how to move forward with treatment. Please call (734) 936-7175 the next business day after your injection to share your pain diary entries. You may also send a picture of the diary to your referring provider through your online patient portal.
- Keep the area where you had your injection clean and dry.
- For 48 hours after your injection, avoid baths, hot tubs, swimming, steam rooms, and saunas. You may shower.
- You may go back to eating and drinking normally and taking your prescription medications.

Care instruction after a radiofrequency ablation (RFA)

- You can expect feeling like you have a mild sunburn around the area of the ablation. This can last 7-10 days.
- You can manage any discomfort by putting an ice pack on the area (apply it for 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off) and an over-the-counter pain medication like acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®).

- It may take 4-6 weeks for you to feel the full effect of the procedure. You should have a follow-up appointment 6 weeks after the procedure with your healthcare provider.
- Slowly increase your activities after 24 hours.
- Keep the area where you had the ablation clean and dry.
- For 48 hours after your ablation, avoid baths, hot tubs, swimming, steam rooms, and saunas. You may shower.
- You may go back to eating and drinking normally and taking your prescription medications.

Care instructions after conscious sedation

Depending on your therapy, you may have also received **conscious sedation** (medication that relaxes you and blocks pain while you're still awake during a procedure). If so, follow these instructions:

- You may go back to eating and drinking normally.
- Do not do any activities that require alertness or coordination until the day after your procedure. This includes:
 - Driving
 - Operating heavy machinery
 - Using power tools
 - Cooking
 - Climbing
 - Signing any legal documents or making legal decisions
- Do not drink alcohol for 12 hours.

When should I call for help?

Please call us if you have any of these symptoms:

- Severe back pain

- A fever over 100.4 °F
- Severe headache that goes away or significantly improves when you're lying flat
- Nausea or vomiting that won't stop or go away
- New numbness in your legs or arms
- Severe redness, swelling, red streaks, or drainage (leaking fluid) at your injection site
- Sudden loss of bowel or bladder control (you can't control the urge to pee or poop)

What is the contact information?

- On Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM: Call **(734) 936-7175**
- On evenings, weekends, or holidays: Call the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation on-call doctor at **(734) 936-6267**

In case of an emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department. If you can, take this handout with you.

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