

Anderson Office

100 Healthy Way
Suite 1260, Anderson SC 29621
Ph (864) 225-3551 • Fax (864) 328-0328

Greenville Office

3 St. Francis Drive
Suite 480, Greenville SC 29601
Ph (864) 269-4416 • Fax (864) 269-4416

Piedmont Comprehensive
Pain Management Group LLC

managing your pain
improving your quality of life



Lumbar Transforaminal Epidural Steroid Injection

What is a Lumbar Transforaminal Epidural Steroid I Injection?

A lumbar transforaminal epidural steroid injection (*TFESI*) is an injection of local anesthetic (*numbing medicine*) and steroid medication into the bony opening (*the foramen*) between the lumbar vertebrae. The lumbar root exits the spine at the foramen and travels down to the leg. The nerve root can become compressed between the disc and the bony wall of the foramen causing inflammation and pain. Steroids are powerful anti-inflammatory agents that work best when injected directly into the area where the inflammation is occurring. The goal of the lumbar TFESI is to reduce inflammation of the lumbar nerve root at the area of compression thereby relieving pain in the lower back or legs. It is important to understand that a lumbar transforaminal epidural steroid injection will not correct the preexisting medical condition, but it may significantly decrease your level of pain.

What to expect when receiving a Lumbar Transforaminal Epidural Steroid Injection

A lumbar TFESI is a minor surgical procedure that can be performed safely in the Piedmont Comprehensive Pain Management Group office. The procedure lasts for about 30 minutes. You will be asked to sign a consent form, and you will be helped onto the exam room table where you will remain lying on your stomach for the remainder of the procedure. After being cleansed with an antiseptic solution, the injection site will be anesthetized (*numbed*) with a local anesthetic. At this time you may feel a temporary stinging or burning sensation. Once numbed, a small needle is advanced into the epidural space. Fluoroscopy, a type of x-ray, will be used by your physician to ensure safe and proper placement of the needle. Next, the steroid mixture will be injected into the epidural space. It is not uncommon to experience a feeling of pressure at this point in the procedure. Finally, the needle will be carefully removed, and the procedure will be complete. Following the procedure, the injection site will be cleansed, and a band aid will be applied.

How will I feel after the Injection?

Immediately following the injection you may experience temporary pain relief that may last for several hours. This is due to the numbing medication, and once the numbing medicine wears off, your pain may return. It may take two to three days for the anti-inflammatory steroid medication to have an effect. For this reason, it may be several days before you notice a change in our pain. In rare cases, your pain may temporarily increase following the injection. It is not uncommon to need more than one injection to get long term benefit. Sometimes an injection brings several weeks to months of pain relief, and then further treatment is needed. In some cases a single injection may provide significant pain relief, and no further injections are necessary.

Common Risks Associated with Lumbar Transforaminal Epidural Steroid Injection

Transforaminal epidural steroid injections are considered a very safe, minimally invasive procedure. However, like any injection procedure, there are some associated risks/side effects. Common complications include bleeding and bruising at the injection site, post-procedure headaches, dizziness or lightheadedness immediately following the procedure, and numbness or weakness. If you experience any concerning symptoms following your injection, you should call your doctor immediately or go to an emergency room.

Pre and Post Procedure Instructions

- Bring a driver to your injection appointment. You will be rescheduled if you do not have a driver. This is for your own safety
- Discuss any anti-coagulants (*blood thinners*) that you are currently taking with your physician. It may or may not be necessary to discontinue some of these medications for a short time prior to this injection.
- Do not work the day of your injection. You should be able to return to work the following day.

If you have any questions regarding your procedure, do not hesitate to contact us.