



Frequently Asked Questions

How do I prepare for an interventional (non-surgical) spine procedure?

- Advise your physician if you are currently being treated for any infection, taking blood thinners (Coumadin, Plavix, or Heparin or ASA or Lovenox), have a history of bleeding disorder, or have a history of iodine dye allergy.
- Arrive at the specified "Check-In" time for your appointment.
- Procedure time generally ranges from 20 to 45 minutes, but plan on being at the hospital or surgery center for 2 to 3 hours for admitting and observation after the procedure.
- You will be kept on a gurney for observation for approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour after the procedure. Ask your physician when you can return to work.
- An IV will be started to permit access for medication should sedation be necessary for comfort (this may vary). **PLEASE** arrange for someone to drive you home. Do not drive for 12 hours after the procedure (even if sedation is not administered).
- Do not take any Aspirin or Aspirin-containing medications for 7 days before the injection - **NO** Motrin, Feldene, Naprosyn, Advil, Voltaren, Disalcid, Anaprox, Relafen, Ansaid, Lodine, Aleve, Nuprin or other "anti-inflammatory" medication 3 days before the injection. It is OK to take Tylenol, Norco, Vicodin, Darvocet or Codeine.
- Advise the nurse at the hospital of any drug allergies you may have.
- **DO NOT EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING PAST MIDNIGHT JUST PRIOR TO THE PROCEDURE. YOU MAY TAKE YOUR REGULAR MEDICATIONS WITH A SIP OF WATER.**
- If there is any possibility that you might be pregnant, you should **NOT** have this procedure due to x-ray procedure.

What do I do after the procedure ?

- Do not drive, operate machinery or sign any legal documents for 12 hours after the procedure (especially if sedation was administered)

- Icing the area of injection 20 minutes at a time, 4 times a day for 1-2 days following the procedure will reduce local muscle soreness. You may experience injection area achiness and stiffness for 2-3 days.
- Improvement in your baseline condition may be noted as early as 2-3 days, but may take 2 weeks for significant effects to be noted.
- Avoid excessive exercise even if you are feeling great, for at least one week.
- If you are currently in physical therapy, resume 5 days following the injection. If your Physical Therapist is unsure of what to do following the injection, have him/her call your physician.
- You may resume regular medications immediately.
- We will call you after the procedure to check on you and arrange your follow-up visit.
- Call your physician if you have any problems related to the injection procedure.

What are potential adverse effects?

- Possible side effects of steroids: These usually last only a few days and include flushing of the face, fluid retention, stomach irritation, mood changes, insomnia, headache, increased heart rate, elevation in blood sugar levels, menstrual cycle changes, and facial flushing.
- Bleeding and infection tend to be the leading factors yet only occur with very little frequency (<1%)
- Allergic reactions to the medications, i.e., local anesthetic, steroid and radiographic dye.
- Although serious complications are extremely rare, they may include nerve damage, seizures, stroke, paralysis, collapsed lung and death.