

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR PROCEDURE

LUMBAR SELECTIVE NERVE ROOT INJECTION

How we do the procedure

A lumbar selective nerve root injection is done to decrease inflammation or irritation of a specific nerve root in the back. You will be lying face down on the procedure table with a pillow under your abdomen. Your back will be cleansed with Betadine and a sterile drape will cover the area. After numbing the area with local anesthetic, a small needle will be inserted alongside the spine and advanced to the level of the specific nerve root to be blocked. An x-ray (fluoroscope) machine will be used to guide needle placement. Once in position, contrast will be injected to ensure that the medications will flow to the desired area. A local anesthetic agent and a steroid (NOT the kind that increases muscle size in athletes) are injected to bathe the inflamed nerve root and hopefully reduce the inflammation to decrease your pain.

What to expect

With the local anesthetic injection, you may notice a numb area on your back, buttock, or leg. Once the local anesthetic has worn off, typically after several hours, your pain may return. The steroid will begin to work in 1-5 days to reduce inflammation. We will schedule you for another injection in 2 weeks. If you have minimal or no pain 2 days prior to your next injection, call our office and we will change your appointment to a follow-up visit. There is a limit of 3 steroid injections in a 10 month period. If no substantial effects are obtained after one or two injections, we will discuss other alternatives

Risks

The risks include bleeding, infection and a reaction to any of the medications used for the procedure. We use sterile technique to avoid infections. If you are taking a "blood thinner" (anticoagulant), we will give you special instructions before the procedure to avoid excess bleeding.

Safety Precautions

Since your ability to drive may be impaired for a few hours, we ask that you have someone drive you home.

Injected steroids occasionally cause nervousness, difficulty sleeping, a flushed feeling (like hot flashes), an increased appetite, an elevated blood sugar, or a "moon face" (rounded face) for several days.