

CT Guided Nerve Root Injection

This brochure tells you about a CT Guided Nerve Root Injection. It includes the benefits and the risks, what happens before, during and after the procedure.

This document should not replace the advice of your relevant health care professional.

What is an CT Guided Nerve Root Injection?

Injection of local anaesthetic and anti-inflammatory (cortisone) drugs into a Nerve Root in your back.

The injection of a nerve root has two purposes; it can be both diagnostic and therapeutic.

- 1) the amount of pain relief after the injection may help to confirm, or rule out the nerve as the source of pain.
- 2) the injection aims to reduce inflammation and / or swelling of the nerve, and therefore pain.
 - Afterwards, you may feel that your pain has reduced or gone altogether. This is due to the local anaesthetic injected around the nerve, and may last for several hours.
 - The anti-inflammatory drug, may take a few days to take effect, and may last days to months.
 - Not everyone experiences pain relief from a Nerve Root injection.

Patient Preparation

- **When booking your injection appointment please inform us if you are taking any blood-thinning medication. (i.e. Aspirin, Warfarin, Clopidogrel, etc). We may ask you to stop taking these.**



Do

1. Fast from food and fluids for 2 hours prior to your procedure.
2. Take any medications prescribed with water.
3. Bring you Medicare card with you.
4. Bring your request form if you have it.
5. Bring any previous imaging with you from the last 2 years if it includes the area to be injected.
6. If you are, or could be, pregnant then please tell your health practitioner or radiographer.
7. Ask if you need a medical certificate.
8. Arrange for a responsible adult to drive you home. **DO NOT DRIVE YOURSELF HOME.**
9. Leave all Jewellery and valuables at home.

Austin Health does not take responsibility for your personal possessions.



Austin Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land we work on and pays its respects to Elders past, present and emerging.
Austin Health celebrates, values and includes people of all backgrounds, genders, sexualities, cultures, bodies and abilities.

What happens during the procedure?

- Before the procedure the doctor will come and discuss the procedure with you. At this time, you will sign a consent form if you wish to go ahead with the injection.
- The doctor will use CT to guide a needle into the nerve root and inject the drug(s).
- Bleeding is normally minimal and after needle removal a small dressing is applied.

How long does it take?

- The procedure takes about 30 minutes.
- Expect to be in the Radiology Department for a minimum of 1 hour
- As soon as you feel comfortable, which is normally immediately after your procedure, you may leave the department and resume light activities.

What are the risks?

- A little bruising is normally the extent of the after-effects.
- Common side effect is a transient increase in pain, termed a flare, which can occur in first 4-48hrs. Treat with simple analgesic measures such as Panadol, and cold packs.
- The steroid may cause facial flushing/redness which can last a few days.
- If you have Diabetes you may notice a rise in blood sugar levels for up to 1 week
- Risks such as infection are very low. We take every precaution to ensure your procedure is safe and sterile.
- If the pain increases in the days following the injection, this may indicate either an aggravation of the synovitis or very rarely an infection of the joint.
- Contact your referring doctor or your nearest emergency department without delay, if you experience
 - An increase or change in your pain
 - Redness or swelling near the injection site
 - You feel unwell or have a fever, chills/sweats
 - New symptoms

After care

- You may resume light daily activities
- Overexertion/use of the joint after the procedure may irritate and prolong recovery time.
- No excessive exercise or heavy manual labour using the affected limb for 10 days following a steroid injection.

What next?

Your results will be sent in a report to the Health Practitioner who referred you for this test.

Please make a follow up appointment with your Health Practitioner to discuss your results and further management plan.

Further information

Department of Radiology

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