

University Pain Consultants

Cervical Epidural Steroid Injection

Patient Instructions



Scan to watch the
procedure video

This procedure delivers anti-inflammatory steroid medication into the epidural space of your neck to reduce nerve irritation and relieve neck, shoulder, and arm pain. It is performed in our office and takes about 15–20 minutes.

Before Your Injection

- Continue all other daily medications (including blood pressure and heart medications) with a small sip of water unless told otherwise.
- You may eat and drink normally the day of the procedure — no fasting is required.
- If you have diabetes, be aware the steroid may temporarily raise your blood sugar. Monitor closely for several days afterward.
- Tell us if you have an active infection, fever, or are or may be pregnant.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing.

No Sedation — You May Drive Yourself

This injection is performed with local anesthetic only, without sedation. You do NOT need a driver — you may safely drive yourself to and from your appointment.

Blood Thinners & Anticoagulants — Please Hold Before Your Procedure

To reduce the risk of bleeding, the following medications must be stopped for the number of days listed below before your injection. Count backwards from your procedure date.

Medication	Hold Before Procedure
Aspirin (low-dose, 81 mg)	Do NOT stop unless told by your doctor
Aspirin (full-dose, 325 mg)	7 days
Clopidogrel (Plavix)	7 days
Prasugrel (Effient)	7–10 days
Ticagrelor (Brilinta)	5 days
Warfarin (Coumadin)	5 days
Apixaban (Eliquis)	3 days
Rivaroxaban (Xarelto)	3 days
Dabigatran (Pradaxa)	4–5 days
Edoxaban (Savaysa)	3 days
Enoxaparin (Lovenox)	24 hours
Ibuprofen / Naproxen (NSAIDs)	3–5 days

Hold times are general guidelines. Your physician may adjust them based on your individual health.

Clearance from prescribing doctor:

- ☐ Clearance from my prescribing doctor IS required before I stop these medications.
- ☐ Clearance is NOT required — I may hold the medications as instructed above.

Do not stop any prescribed blood thinner without physician confirmation if clearance is checked above.

After Your Injection

- Rest for the remainder of the day; avoid strenuous activity, heavy lifting, and vigorous exercise for 24 hours.
- You may resume your held blood thinners the day after the procedure, unless told otherwise.
- Mild soreness at the injection site is normal — apply ice for 15–20 minutes as needed.
- Pain relief may take 2–7 days to take full effect as the steroid begins to work.
- You may resume normal diet and regular medications immediately.

Call the Office If You Experience

- Fever over 101°F, chills, or increasing redness, swelling, or drainage at the injection site.
- Severe or worsening neck or arm pain, new weakness or numbness in the arms.
- Difficulty breathing or swallowing, or severe headache (seek emergency care immediately).