

**WEST WICHITA SURGERY CENTER  
PAIN MANAGEMENT  
PATIENT INFORMATION HANDOUT**

Your physician has referred you for an epidural steroid injection. This is a therapeutic injection administered to decrease the pain you are experiencing in your back or neck..

**APPOINTMENT:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Dr:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHECK-IN AT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*YOU MUST HAVE SOMEONE PRESENT TO DRIVE YOU HOME AFTER THIS APPOINTMENT\*\***

A variety of conditions may lead to injury and / or inflammation of the structures around the spine. This inflammation or injury causes pain and can put pressure on the nerves going to various areas of the body. This in turn produces sensations of pain, pressure, tingling or numbness.

An epidural steroid injection is an injection of long lasting anti-inflammatory medication in and around the area of inflammation or injury which may reduce the symptoms. Because the anti-inflammatory medication takes 24 hours to begin working, a numbing medicine is most often added to provide immediate pain relief.

Before the procedure, your physician will talk with you and perform an examination. The procedure takes about 10 minutes and involves minimal discomfort. A local anesthetic is used to numb the skin and deeper tissues of the area. The injection of the medication can cause a sensation of pressure but you should notice some pain relief shortly after due to the numbing medication. Do not be discouraged if your pain returns hours later after the local anesthetic wears off. Remember: the steroids take 24 hours to begin working and will not reach maximum effect until the 3<sup>rd</sup> day after injection. Following the injection you may experience heaviness or numbness in your legs or arms therefore we ask that you have someone present to drive you home. We advise patients to rest the remainder of the day and resume your usual activities the next day.

If the first injection does not relieve your pain or symptoms within 1 – 2 weeks, your physician may recommend additional injections. Generally not more than 3 injections are performed in a 6 month period.

As with any procedure, there are potential risks and complications of an epidural steroid injection. The most common complications include: slight weight gain, water retention, and / or suppression of the body's ability to fight infection. Diabetics may experience difficulty in controlling their blood sugar and should work closely with their physician in this incidence. Risks include spinal headache, infection, bleeding inside the epidural space or nerve damage.

**REFER TO THE ATTACHED ANTICOAGULANT HANDOUT REGARDING THE LIST OF MEDICATIONS THAT MUST BE STOPPED PRIOR TO THIS APPT.**