



**Southend University  
Hospital**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Patient Information Service

Surgical business unit – Day surgery unit

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## **Advice following an epidural injection**

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## **What does this involve?**

This is an injection of local anaesthetic and a small amount of steroid into the lower region of your back.

## **What are the risks?**

- allergic reaction to injection
- infection/bleeding.

## **Possible side-effects**

- Low blood pressure immediately after injection, due to the local anaesthetic numbing the nerves to the blood vessels in the legs so that they relax and open up widely
- Pain may get worse before it gets better. This is due to a temporary increase in inflammation caused by the steroid in the injection
- Steroids can make people feel flushed, hot or excitable, so that they find it difficult to sleep for a few days
- Sometimes the local anaesthetic can cause temporary numbness of the buttocks, legs or bladder. This may make standing or walking difficult, or lead to incontinence of urine. If this happens, you may have to stay overnight for observation.

## **What are the benefits?**

To ease the pain and discomfort you have in your back and/or leg.

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## After the procedure

Once you are home you should mobilise gently over the next few days and gradually resume normal activities. Avoid standing for long periods. You may experience pins and needles in your lower limbs but this should settle over the next few days. It can take up to two weeks to feel the full benefit of this injection. A small plaster will cover your injection site. This should be kept dry for 24 hours and then removed. You can then bath or shower as normal.

## Pain and sickness

You may experience some discomfort or sickness after your procedure. Medication will be given to relieve this. Painkillers may be given to take home. Please take as directed. If you take Aspirin or any other blood thinning medication you will be given advice regarding re-starting this.

**Please note: If any of the following occur seek medical advice:**

- Inflamed injection site
- Severe headache
- Prolonged dizziness
- Generalised leg weakness
- Difficulty passing urine or having your bowels open

**Do not drive, operate machinery or drink alcohol  
for 24 hours following treatment.**



# Patient Information Service

If this leaflet does not answer all of your questions, or if you have any other concerns please contact the day surgery unit on: **01702 385053** or **01702 435555 ext 6158**.

**[www.southend.nhs.uk](http://www.southend.nhs.uk)**

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For a translated, large print or audio tape version of this document please contact:

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