



Lumbar Transforaminal Block (Selective Epidural)

<i>What is it?</i>	A lumbar transforaminal block procedure is an injection performed on the spine. A fluoroscope (x-ray machine) assists the physician in locating the nerve roots that are thought to be inflamed and contributing to your pain.
<i>Why is it done?</i>	This procedure is done to relieve pain that radiates from the back to the leg(s). Examination and/or test results (MRI, EMG) show evidence of nerve root entrapment or injury. Nerve root entrapment can be caused by a herniated (ruptured) or bulging intravertebral disc (cushion between vertebrae), arthritis or bony spurs (protrusions) in the back. Some patients develop scar tissue that compresses a nerve after back surgery.
<i>How is it done?</i>	You will be positioned face down on a cushioned x-ray table, and a pillow will be placed under your stomach area, providing comfort and rounding out the back. A small needle is used to inject a local anesthetic (numbing medication) to numb the skin. Next, a small needle is placed. Dye may be injected so that the position of the needle tip in the neural foramen (the hole where the nerve root exits) can be confirmed with the assistance of fluoroscopy (x-ray machine). The dye will spread along the nerve root itself and into the space surrounding the spinal canal. Once correct placement is confirmed, a solution of local anesthetic and a cortisone derivative (anti-inflammatory medication) is then injected. The needle is removed and a small band aid is applied.
<i>Is there any preparation?</i>	You may receive conscious sedation. Conscious sedation is medication given through an intravenous (IV) catheter (tube) in your arm. The medication will help you relax, but it will not put you to sleep. If you opt to have conscious sedation, you MUST NOT EAT OR DRINK for 4 hours before your procedure. You may, however, take your medication with a small sip of water .
<i>What to wear?</i>	Please wear loose, comfortable clothing. Please leave all jewelry and other valuables at home.
<i>How long does it take?</i>	We ask that you arrive 30-45 minutes before the scheduled time of your procedure. The procedure lasts about 15 to 30 minutes, and you will be in the recovery area about 15 minutes.
<i>Risks</i>	The risks of this procedure include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Pain in the area where the needle(s) were inserted. The pain can last for two to three days, and can be treated by using ice and mild analgesics (pain medication) such as Motrin, Naprosyn or Tylenol. * An allergic reaction to the local anesthetic or dye. Most allergic reactions do not require further treatment. * Temporary numbness or weakness in your arms or legs, depending on the location of the injection: This is normal. You should have assistance with walking and should not drive for 24 hours after the procedure * Bleeding in the area of the injection * Infection in the area of the injection * Increased pain * Nerve damage, stroke, paralysis and even death.