

DAB Health Imaging

Patient Information – Spinal & Image-Guided Injection Procedures

What Is Image-Guided Injections?

Image-guided injections are minimally invasive procedures used to diagnose and treat pain involving joints, nerves, tendons, bursae, and the spine. Using Ultrasound or CT guidance allows the radiologist to accurately place medication into the affected area to improve safety and effectiveness.

These injections may include:

- Corticosteroid (anti-inflammatory medication)
- Local anesthetic
- Contrast dye (for CT-guided procedures)

Ultrasound-Guided Injections, PRP & Biopsy Procedures

Ultrasound-guided procedures use real-time imaging to accurately guide needles into joints, tendons, soft tissues, or abnormal areas without radiation exposure.

Common ultrasound-guided procedures include:

- Joint and tendon injections
- Bursa injections
- Trigger point injections
- Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) injections
- Soft tissue and thyroid biopsies
- Fine needle aspiration procedures

PRP injections use a concentrated sample of your own blood platelets to assist healing in injured tendons, joints, and soft tissues. Biopsy procedures involve taking a small tissue sample for laboratory analysis to assist with diagnosis.

CT-Guided Injections

CT-guided injections use detailed imaging to precisely target deep joints, spinal structures, and nerves.

Common CT-guided procedures include:

- Facet joint injections
- Nerve root injections
- Epidural steroid injections
- Sacroiliac joint injections
- Hip injections

Epidural Steroid Injections

An epidural steroid injection places anti-inflammatory medication into the epidural space around the spinal nerves to reduce inflammation and pain.

These injections may help conditions such as:

- Disc bulges or herniation
- Sciatica
- Spinal stenosis
- Nerve irritation
- Degenerative spinal disease

Relief may occur within several days and can last from weeks to months depending on the condition being treated.

Thoracic Epidural Steroid Injection

A thoracic epidural steroid injection treats pain originating from the middle or upper back.

During the procedure:

1. You will lie on the CT or procedure table.
2. The skin is cleaned and numbed with local anaesthetic.
3. Imaging guidance is used to accurately position the needle.
4. Contrast dye may be used.
5. Steroid medication is injected around the affected nerve.

The procedure usually takes approximately 15–30 minutes.

Preparing for Your Injection

Please inform staff if you:

- Are pregnant or may be pregnant
- Have allergies to medications or contrast dye
- Take blood thinning medication
- Have diabetes
- Have an infection or fever

You may be asked to:

- Stop certain blood-thinning medications
- Fast before the procedure
- Arrange transport home after your appointment

Please continue regular medications unless instructed otherwise.

Risks and Possible Complications

These procedures are generally very safe; however, possible risks include:

- Temporary increase in pain
- Bleeding or bruising
- Infection
- Allergic reaction
- Headache
- Temporary numbness or weakness
- Failure to improve symptoms

Serious complications are rare.

- Rest for the remainder of the day
- Avoid strenuous activity for 24 hours
- Keep the injection site clean and dry
- Resume normal medications unless advised otherwise

Seek urgent medical attention from your GP or visit the Hospital if you experience:

- Fever
- Increasing redness or swelling
- Severe headache
- New weakness or numbness
- Difficulty breathing
- Loss of bladder or bowel control

Results and Follow-Up

Some patients experience immediate temporary relief from the local anaesthetic, while steroid medication may take several days to work.

Your referring doctor will discuss:

- Your response to treatment
- Further management options
- Whether additional injections or treatments are required

For further information, please contact your GP.

Aftercare Instructions

After your procedure: