

## What are the risks and side effects associated with the procedure?

### Common side effects

- Bruising to the injected area.
- Facial flushing for a few days.
- In women short term alteration to your usual menstrual cycle.
- A short term increase in your blood sugar levels if you suffer with diabetes, this may make your diabetes more difficult to manage for a few days.
- Temporary difficulty standing on the side injected.

### Less common side effects

- Increased pain for several days.
- Permanent increased pain.
- Allergy to injected medication.
- Permanent nerve damage, resulting in weakness or paralysis, this is rare.
- Headache and infection.

### Important information



Please inform the admission office on 01803 656031 if you have

- Any form of infection that requires you to take antibiotics.
- If you are taking antibiotics, Aspirin, Warfarin, Clopidogrel, Rivaroxaban or Dabigatran **before attending**. Some of these may need to be stopped some days prior to your appointment.



**PATIENT  
INFORMATION**

# Nerve root injection



## What is a nerve root injection?

Between each bone (vertebra) of the lower part of your back there is a nerve root. These join up to make the nerves that go to your legs so that you can move your legs and feel the legs being touched. Nerve roots can become irritated or squeezed, often by the discs between the vertebrae. A nerve root Injection is an injection around the painful nerve root. This may help the pain in your leg **the injection may not help with weakness or loss of feeling or help with any back pain you have.**

## What will happen on the day?

You may eat and drink as normal unless your hospital letter states otherwise. Take all your tablets at the normal times, **apart from medication such as Warfarin, Clopidogrel, Rivaroxaban or Dabigatran** as these may need to be stopped beforehand. You should be informed at your outpatient appointment if you need to stop these drugs. **If your GP prescribes any of the above medication between your outpatient appointment and your injection ring the admission office on 01803 656031 to inform the consultant.** You will not need to get undressed but if you could wear loose fitting clothing such as tracksuit clothing so that the skin can be easily exposed.

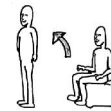
- You will be lying on your front for the procedure, which usually takes 10-20 minutes.
- Your skin will be cleaned with alcohol that will feel very cold. Local anaesthetic is injected to numb the skin and can sometimes sting. An x-ray machine is used to help with the correct placement of the needle (for female patients you may be asked if there is any chance that you could be pregnant prior to having x-rays). Occasionally the needle can bump into the nerve this can cause a shooting sensation down your leg. If this happens the needle is

moved away from the nerve. As the injection is done you may notice an increasing ache into your leg., this is not normally very painful.

## Does it work?

You may have improvement in your leg pain immediately because of the local anaesthetic in the injection. The steroid is the bit of the injection that helps the most; it may be several days before this really starts to work. Pain relief can last many weeks. If the pain returns after some time you could have another injection or try different painkillers or consider options such as surgery.

## What happens after the procedure?



After the procedure you will need to stay in the department for thirty minutes or so, until you are able to walk and are fit for discharge.



**You must be collected from the unit you will not be allowed to travel home by bus or train.**



You will be given a discharge letter explaining what injection you have been given and a pain diary to fill in. You will be told how to fill this in during your appointment; this will help the consultant decide what happens next.



Continue to take your pain tablets until you notice some improvement.



After your injection take things easy for the rest of the day. Do not do any hard exercise or heavy work for the first few days.