



Fact Sheet – Image Guided Nerve Root Sleeve Injection

Introduction

NRSI's are usually undertaken when a nerve is inflamed and/or compressed usually by a spinal disc pressing on it causing pain. This may involve the neck, upper or lower back with symptoms in the arms, body or legs. Each nerve root exiting the spine is covered and surrounded by a sheath or sleeve of fat.

This procedure works by reducing inflammation via injection of a small dose of anti-inflammatory medication (corticosteroid) and local anaesthetic into the relevant nerve root sleeve.

At Direct Radiology, we use a CT scanner to guide a thin needle very accurately into the nerve root sleeve.

How do I prepare for a CT guided nerve root sleeve injection?

- Please bring to Direct Radiology any previous scans and reports (such as x-ray, CT and MRIs) as this will assist the radiologist performing the procedure.
- We accept referrals written on any request form even if it is for another radiology service.

Because you will be lying on your stomach during the procedure and will be uncomfortable if your stomach is too full, it is advisable to limit food intake to a light meal only, up to 2 hours before the procedure.

We strongly recommend that you organize for a responsible person to drive you home on the day of the procedure.

What happens during an image guided nerve root sleeve injection?

We will ensure that the process is as comfortable as possible. Our staff and radiologist will guide you each step of the way.

You will be asked to wear a gown for the procedure.

During the procedure you will be lying on your stomach on a bed that moves into the CT scanner.

A series of planning scans will be done first.

Antiseptic will then be used to clean your skin before local anaesthetic is given. This will cause some initial stinging but will quickly become numb.

A needle will then be placed into the intended nerve root sleeve and medication injected.

The whole procedure itself takes no more than 15 to 20 minutes.

What happens after an image guided nerve root sleeve injection?

You may feel some minor discomfort at the injection site.

As a local anaesthetic was injected into the nerve sleeve, you will feel some numbness, weakness and maybe clumsiness temporarily lasting up to 1-2 hours in the arm or leg on the same side as the injection.

You will be observed usually for 30 minutes and discharged when feeling well.



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Do not drive or operate machinery for at least 24 hours after the procedure.

Do not participate in strenuous activity that day.

You may remove any bandages in the evening before going to bed.

If you have diabetes, your blood sugar numbers may increase. Your GP will counsel you regarding management

Direct Radiology will issue a report to your referring doctor.

What are the risks of an image guided nerve root sleeve injection?

Risks complications are rare and include:

- Infection
- Bleeding
- Nerve damage

Allergic reactions to the steroid and local anaesthetic

If you develop a fever, chills, increasing pain, or if you have new symptoms, please call your GP directly.

IMPORTANT

Please call Direct Radiology on (03) 9489 8884 if you have any questions as we are more than happy to assist.