

Cervical Epidural Steroid Injection

Relief for nerve pain that runs into the shoulder or arm

Step-by-step visual guide
Review with your care team

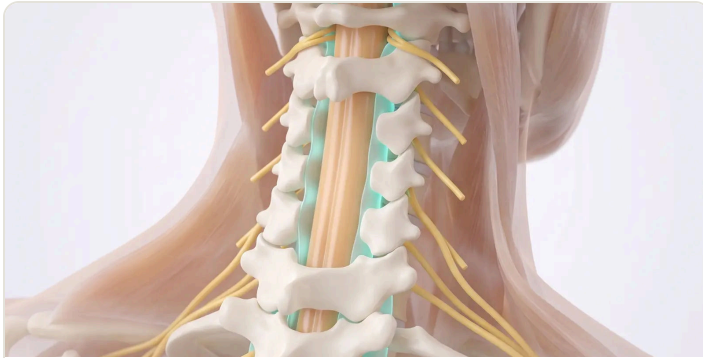
What it is: An image-guided injection that places anti-inflammatory medicine into the epidural space of the neck — the protective sleeve just outside the sac that surrounds the spinal cord and nerve roots.

Often used for: Pinched nerves in the neck from a herniated disc or arthritis narrowing — pain, tingling, or numbness radiating to the shoulder blade, arm, or hand.

~15 minutes

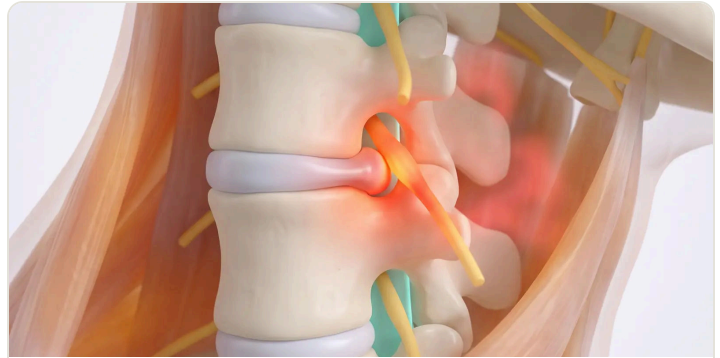
X-ray guided

Home the same day



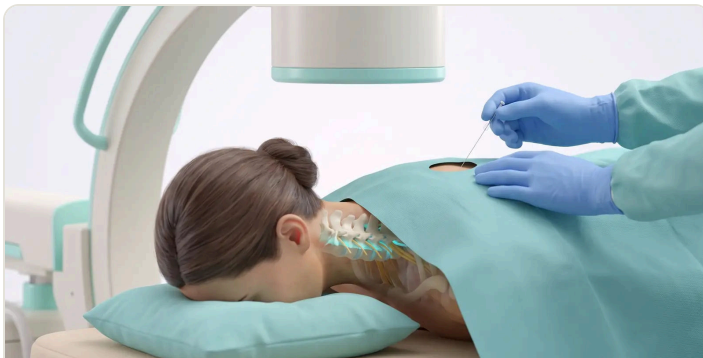
1 The anatomy

Seven small vertebrae protect the spinal cord as it carries signals between brain and body. Nerve roots exit at each level toward the shoulders and arms; the epidural space (teal) surrounds and cushions them.



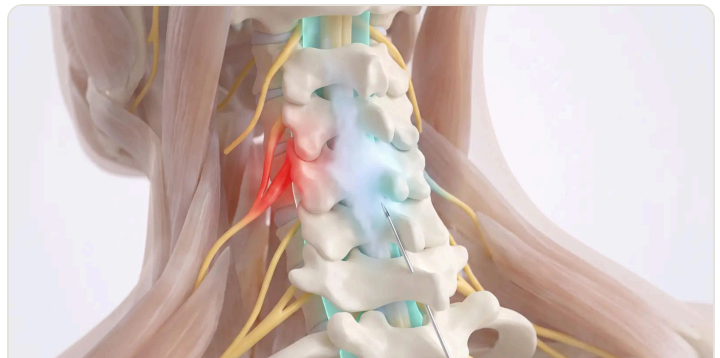
2 Where the pain starts

A worn or herniated disc can press on an exiting nerve root and inflame it — causing pain, tingling, or numbness that travels along that nerve into the arm.



3 The procedure

You lie face down with your forehead supported. Skin is numbed first. Using continuous X-ray guidance, a very thin needle is advanced at the base of the neck — the widest, safest entry level.



4 Relief delivered

The needle tip stops in the epidural space, outside the nerve sac — it never touches the spinal cord. Anti-inflammatory medicine spreads gently upward and bathes the irritated root, cooling the inflammation so it can settle.

What to expect: Mild soreness for a day or two is normal. Relief usually builds over 3–7 days as the steroid takes effect.

This handout is general patient-education material, not medical advice or a treatment recommendation. Illustrations are simplified artistic renderings, not exact anatomy. Benefits, risks, alternatives, and recovery vary by person — your physician will review the specifics of your situation, and you can ask questions at any time. Seek immediate care for fever, new weakness or numbness, loss of bladder or bowel control, or severe worsening pain.