



Lysis of Adhesions

WHAT IS EPIDURAL LYSIS OF ADHESIONS?

This procedure is performed to remove excessive scarring in the epidural space. The epidural space is a thin area between the inside of the spine and the protective layer around the spinal cord. Scar tissue may restrict the natural movement of nerves causing inflammation and pain.

WHAT PATIENTS ARE CANDIDATES FOR LYSIS OF ADHESIONS?

Patients who have had prior neck or back surgery but still have persistent pain may benefit from this procedure. Patients who have herniated disks that are not surgically correctable may also receive pain relief from this procedure.

HOW IS THE PROCEDURE PERFORMED?

You will be given conscious sedation through an IV (intravenous needle) inserted in your arm/hand and asked to lay on your stomach for the procedure. The doctor and nurse will monitor your blood pressure, heart rate and respiratory rate (breathing) during the procedure. The physician will perform the procedure with a special x ray machine called the fluoroscope to accurately visualize the anatomy. Then contrast dye will be injected to see the restrictive location or scarring area in your epidural space which may be causing your pain. Then a special catheter called the Racz catheter will be guided with x ray to the scarred area. A special medication called hyaluronidase, in conjunction with the Racz catheter, is injected to break up the scarring. A mixture of steroids and local anesthetic (numbing medicine) will be injected to decreased the inflammation and provide pain relief after the lysis of adhesions. Hypertonic saline (concentrated salt water for medical use) maybe injected after the numbing medicine takes effect to further help dissolve scar tissue and adhesions.

WILL THE PROCEDURE BE PAINFUL?

Typically the sedation provided minimizes pain. Pain may increase in the first 48-72 hours because of the mechanical forces used to break up the scarring.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND SIDE EFFECTS FROM THE RACZ LYSIS OF ADHESIONS?

The most common risks are local pain from the needle and catheter which is typically a mild to moderate burning sensation lasting two to seven days. More serious but extremely rare risks are bleeding, infection, nerve injury, paralysis, bowel/bladder incontinence and weakness in the lower extremities.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR THE PROCEDURE TO WORK?

The beneficial effects, if any, are usually appreciated two to four weeks following the procedure