

Discharge advice following an epidural infusion

Patient Information

Acute Pain Service

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The removal of your epidural catheter

Rarely complications can occur after an epidural catheter is removed from your back. The nurse will be keeping a close check on you over the next few days. They will continue to ask if you have any pain or any change in the feeling or strength in your arms and legs.

Infections

We will make sure that the area where the epidural catheter was inserted is kept clean and dry. This is because **rarely** an infection can develop at the site where the epidural catheter was inserted.

The nurses will look for any early signs of infection such as redness, pain and/or swelling. An infection can develop on the surface under the skin or more deeply close to the spinal cord and major nerves. This could be an abscess (a collection of pus) or meningitis. Please remember that these infections **are very rare** but would require urgent treatment with antibiotics and/or surgery to prevent permanent nerve injury.

Haematoma (swelling or collection of blood at the site of insertion)

There is a small chance that you may develop a collection of blood which is known as an epidural haematoma. This haematoma may press on a nerve or the spinal cord and cause damage. Again, this is highly unlikely.

Following your discharge, it is important that you or your carers continue to look out for any symptoms which could suggest a complication from your epidural catheter site on your back.

Watch out for:

- Redness and/or swelling around the site where the epidural catheter was inserted.
- Pus (a yellow or green coloured ooze) from the site where the epidural catheter was inserted.
- Fever.
- New, severe back pain near the site of the epidural catheter.
- Reduced sensation (feelings) or strength in your arms and legs.
- Difficulty in passing urine or incontinence of urine or bowels that you did not have before your surgery.

If you become aware of any of the above, please go straight to your nearest accident and emergency department (A&E) and inform them that you have recently had an epidural catheter.

If you have any questions or concerns about your epidural catheter site, please contact the ward you were discharged from or the Pain Service. The Pain Service can be contacted via switchboard or after 4pm contact Accident & Emergency on 01942 822440.

Please use this space to write notes or reminders.

Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends and carers.

Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)

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Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use and store the information we hold about you, please take a look at our “how we use your information” leaflet which can be found on the Trust website: <https://www.wwl.nhs.uk>

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille and other languages upon request. For more information please ask in the department/ward.

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