

Caudal Steroid Injection

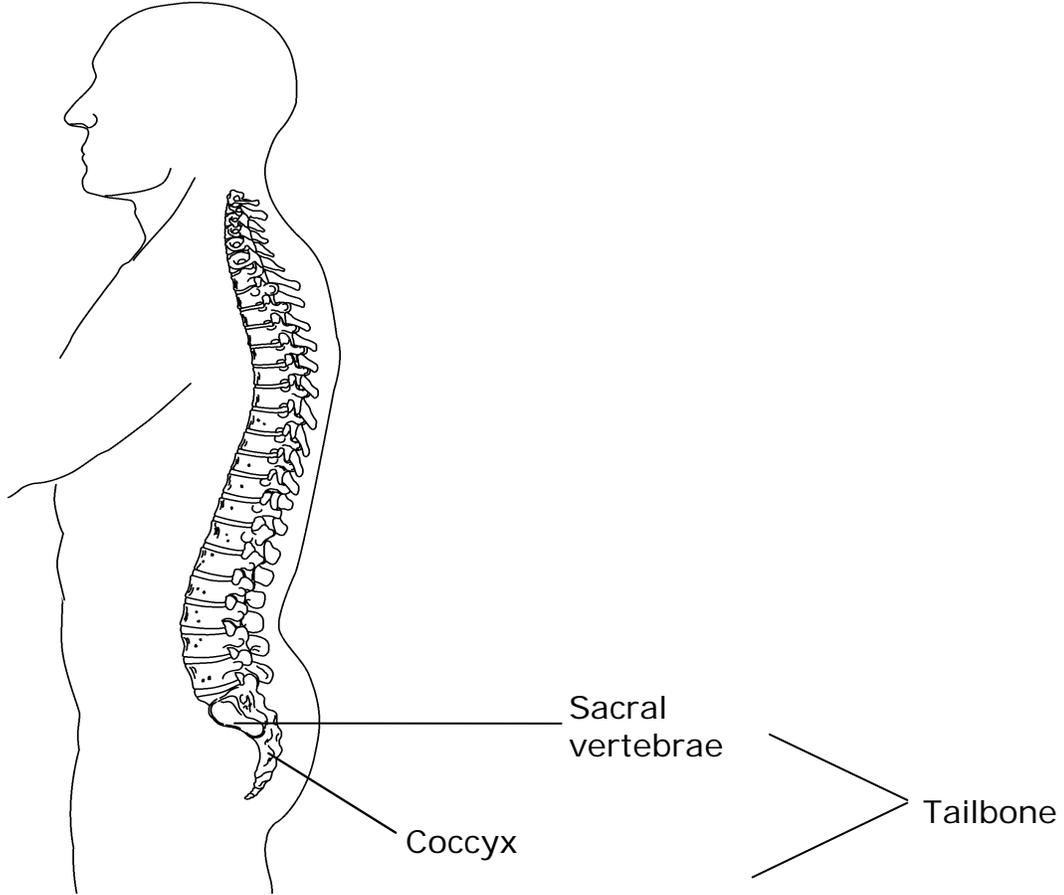
A Caudal Steroid Injection is done to provide pain relief. The injection provides pain relief by reducing swelling and irritation around nerve roots at the base of the spine or tailbone.

The injection contains a local anesthetic for pain control and a steroid to reduce inflammation.

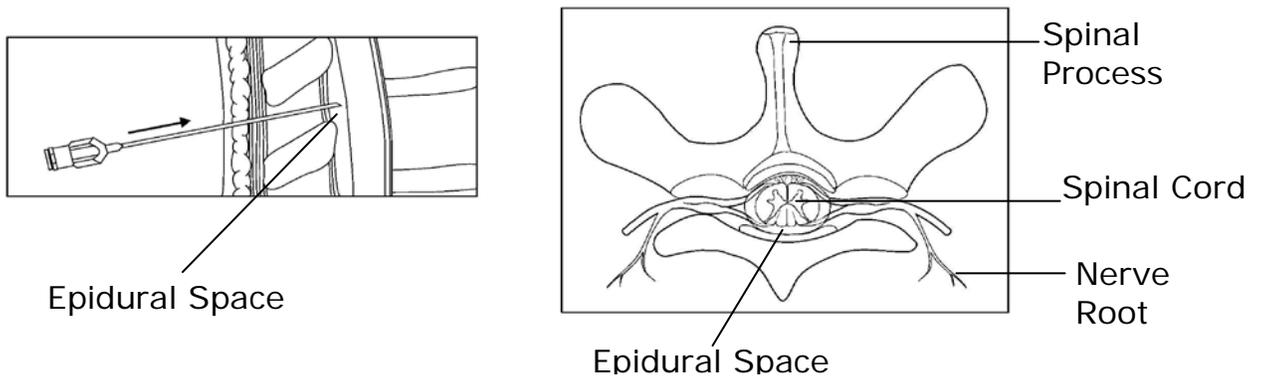
The information in this handout is to help you prepare for your injection.

About the injection

The injection is done at the base of the spine or tailbone.



To provide pain relief a local anesthetic and steroid medication are injected into the epidural space surrounding the spinal cord.



Before your appointment

- If you are taking blood thinning and/or antiplatelet medication, ask the doctor or nurse for instructions, **at least 2 weeks before the procedure.**
- If you are unwell, have a fever, an infection or are on antibiotics, please call us at the Michael G. DeGroote Pain Clinic - 905-521-2100, extension 44621.
- Eat a light meal and drink before your appointment.
- If you have diabetes, stick to your routine with what you eat and taking your regular medications.
- Come to the Pain Clinic at the time on your appointment card.
- Bring a list of your medications to every appointment.
- An x-ray may be taken. Let us know if you could be pregnant.
- Let us know if you have an allergy to x-ray dye.
- Arrange to have a ride home. You may be in the Pain Clinic for about 60 to 90 minutes.

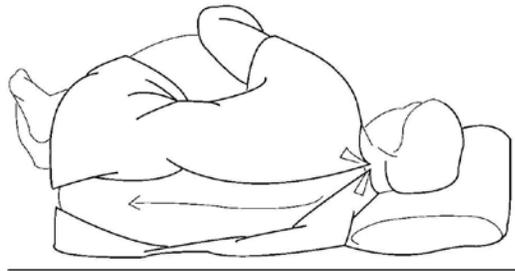
When you first arrive at your appointment

- You will be asked to complete a pain level questionnaire.

It is very important that you are aware and understand fully the risks and benefits of the procedure. Please discuss the risks and benefits of treatment with your doctor.

During the injection

You will sit on the side of the bed and your blood pressure may be checked. A probe is placed on your finger to check your heart rate and oxygen level. Your doctor will assist you into the proper position for the injection.



Lying Down

1. After the doctor washes your back, a freezing medication may be injected under the skin. This makes the area numb. It may sting.
 2. Then, the epidural space is identified and after proper needle positioning the steroid medication is injected. The injection usually takes about 5 minutes, but may take longer.
 3. After the injection, you will rest on a stretcher in the recovery area for about 15 minutes.
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When should I expect to feel improvement?

The effects of a caudal injection can be felt right away or take up to 3 weeks to notice.

Some people notice an increase in back discomfort for 2 to 3 days. This is due to irritation of the nerve roots. If this happens use any pain relief methods that you have used in the past: such as medications, ice and rest.

You may also have some tenderness in the tailbone where the needle was inserted.

When you go home

- Rest.
 - If you have a bandage take it off when you go to bed.
 - Do not apply heat to the injection site.
 - Do not soak in a tub bath, swimming pool or a hot tub for 24 hours after the injection.
 - You can get back to your normal activities and exercises the next day.
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Side effects

You may have some side effects after the injection. These include:

- **headache** - take pain medication as needed and drink lots of fluids. Drinks with caffeine may help.
- **backache** - apply ice to the injection site for 20 minutes every hour if needed. Wrap the ice pack in a plastic bag and a towel before you apply it.
- if you have diabetes you may notice an increase in blood sugar for 24 hours after the injection. Adjust your insulin and check your sugar levels as needed. Call your family doctor or diabetes specialist if you are unable to control your blood sugar. If you have any long term blood sugar changes, please let us know at your follow-up appointment.
- if you have high blood pressure, it may also temporarily increase.

Rare side effects

Rare side effects that may happen with steroid injection include:

- your body's ability to produce steroids. You may experience weakness, dizziness and fatigue.
- you may have too much steroid in your body, and may experience weight gain, skin changes, osteoporosis (bone thinning), and changes in sexual function.

Please talk with your doctor if you have concerns or experience any of these side effects.

Emergency

Go to Emergency if you have progressive numbness or loss of sensation within 12 hours of your injection.

Call us if you have:

- a severe headache that lasts for more than a few days
- a fever greater than 38°C or 100.4°F
- redness at the injection site
- severe back pain
- new numbness or severe weakness the next day

**Michael G DeGroote Pain Clinic
McMaster University Medical Centre
905-521-2100, extension 44621**

