

What to Expect

Injection procedures involving the spine require preparation to ensure your recovery is a positive experience and leads to a better quality of life. You should expect improvement in your spine-related pain after your injection; however, some patients may experience a mild increase in post-procedure pain. **Our goal at Flagstaff Bone and Joint is to help you have the best possible experience and result.** We have prepared this document for you to read and review to gain a better understanding of what to expect and how to prepare for your injection procedure. Your commitment, involvement, and dedication will be vital to a successful outcome from your procedure.

Side Effects & Risks

As with any procedure, there are potential side effects and risks with injection procedures involving the spine. Side effects associated with spine injections are usually temporary and are tolerable. Possible side effects include, but are not limited to, nausea, headache, dizziness, fainting, and warmth or flushing of the face. The most common risk is your injection procedure does not provide meaningful or lasting pain relief. Serious complications associated with spine injections are rare and may include infection, localized bleeding or blood clot, nerve damage, or other severe complications which could result in death. Your provider team will review your medical history to reduce these risks. If you have any questions or concerns, please address them with your physician.

Support System

Arrange for a **responsible adult to assist you** throughout this process. Choose someone who can attend office visits, take you home after your procedure (if sedation is required), and help you once you've returned home if needed. Share the information in this document with anyone who will be supporting you through this process.

Scheduling

You may be given a tentative appointment time at time of scheduling your procedure. There are often occasions when your procedure time may be changed, should this occur, the Surgery Center will contact you of this change 24-48 hours prior to your procedure.

Our scheduling team will check eligibility and authorization with your insurance company. Please ensure you have up to date contact information in your chart so we can reach you effectively. If you are scheduled for a COVID-19 vaccine, please let our staff know so we can schedule you accordingly. Vaccine and injection procedures must be at least 3 days apart.

Medical History

It is important to share your up-to-date medical information with your physician. You will be asked to confirm what medications you are taking and if you have any health-related problems.

You may be asked the following medical history questions:

- Do you have any health problems such as:
 - Diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure (hypertension)
 - Current dental (teeth/mouth) infections
 - History of pulmonary (lung) disease
 - History of a deep vein thrombosis (blood clot) or pulmonary embolism (blood clot in lung)
 - Bleeding disorders and/or taking anti-coagulant medication (Coumadin, Eliquis, etc.)
 - Kidney disorder or Autoimmune disorder

Medications

Inform our office of all medications (and supplements) you are taking. Certain prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, herbal supplements, and vitamins can interfere with your procedure and need to be adjusted or held for a period of time. The biggest concern is medications/supplements that increase bleeding resulting in poor healing, excess pain, and a higher risk for infection or other complications. Some medications/supplements can interfere with anesthesia drugs that keep you comfortable during a procedure. It is important to ensure that these medications/supplements are out of your system prior to your injection procedure.

Refer to list below for medications of concern and timelines.

Anti-Inflammatories (NSAIDs)

If you are having an epidural steroid injection in the neck (cervical) or upper back (thoracic) region, **STOP** taking any of the following for at least **5 days prior** to your injection procedure: Aspirin, Advil, Aleve, Celebrex, Excedrin, Ibuprofen, Motrin, Naproxen, Meloxicam, Omega 3 (fish oil, flaxseed oil, etc.), Vit E, St. John's Wort, or Ginko, **If another physician has instructed you to take any of these medications, do not discontinue them until you've discussed with your prescribing physician.**

Blood Thinners (Aspirin, Coumadin, Plavix, Xarelto, Eliquis, etc.)

Hold taking blood thinners as directed by your prescribing physician prior to your procedure **only if** you are having an epidural steroid injection in the neck (cervical) or upper back (thoracic) region. **DO NOT** stop taking prescribed blood thinners prior to other spine injection procedures such as medial branch blocks, radiofrequency ablations, or epidural steroid injections into the lumbar spine.

Steroids or Antibiotics

If you are taking steroids (e.g. prednisone, methylprednisolone) or antibiotics (e.g. amoxicillin, penicillin, doxycycline), please **inform** the Surgery Center at Flagstaff Bone and Joint at (928) 440-4610.

Sedation

Conscious sedation, also known as "twilight sleep", is a type of sedation to help reduce the anxiety and pain associated with procedures. If you undergo conscious sedation, you will be given a combination of medications during your procedure to help you relax and to block pain. During conscious sedation, you will most likely feel relaxed while remaining awake and responsive. You may also feel sleepy or even fall asleep while sedated. Discuss with your physician if conscious sedation is recommended for your procedure.

- **If you WILL undergo conscious sedation:**

- Do NOT eat or drink anything 6 hours before your arrival time (including coffee, gum, or hard candy). Sips of water up to 2 hours prior to procedure is okay.
- You MUST arrange for a responsible adult caregiver to assist you the day of your procedure and drive you home afterwards. Sedation may temporarily impair your judgment, perception, and dexterity.
- YOUR CAREGIVER SHOULD STAY WITHIN A SHORT DISTANCE OF THE FACILITY WITH ACCESS TO THEIR PHONE THE DAY OF PROCEDURE.

- **If you will NOT undergo conscious sedation:**

- You may eat and drink per usual before your procedure.
- You may drive yourself home after your procedure.

Procedure Preparation Timeline

Below is how to prepare the day before and day of your injection procedure.

1 Day Before:

- Take all routine medications except those you've been advised to STOP before your procedure. If there is any question about which medications to take, please check with our office at (928) 773-2280.
- Gather everything you need to bring with you to the surgery center:
 - Cases for contact lenses, glasses, or dentures
 - Photo ID and Insurance Card
 - Tote bag for all your belongings

Day Of Procedure:

- Ensure you are freshly bathed/showered prior to your procedure. This will reduce your risk of infection.
- **DO NOT APPLY ANY MAKEUP, MASCARA, FINGERNAIL POLISH, BODY LOTION, DEODORANT, POWDER, OR HAIR PRODUCTS.**
- Wear freshly washed, comfortable, and loose-fitting clothing. DO NOT wear any jewelry.
- Bring your Photo-ID, Insurance Card, cases for contacts, glasses, etc., and tote bag for your belongings.
 - DO NOT bring any valuables with you to your procedure.
- Follow your doctor's instructions regarding medication prior to your procedure. On the morning of your procedure, take any allowed normal medications (including blood pressure medications) with a small sip of water (unless instructed not to by the nurse during your pre-op phone call).
- If you are diabetic; take your oral diabetic medications and insulin per your prescribing physician's orders (unless directed otherwise during your pre-op phone call with the nurse). Bring your diabetic medication with you.
- Use inhalers as usual and bring inhalers with you on the day of your procedure.
- If you come down with a cold, fever, rash, or any other medical problem close to your procedure date, please notify the Surgery Center at Flagstaff Bone and Joint at (928) 440-4610 to be safely rescheduled.
- You **must show up early to your procedure**, please refer to the time given to you by the surgical facility.
- Patients under the age of 18 must arrange to be accompanied by a custodial parent or legal guardian.
- If you are undergoing Conscious Sedation and you eat or drink anything (this includes gum, lozenges, hard candy) before your procedure time, your procedure will be cancelled or significantly delayed.

After Injection

After the injection procedure is completed, you will be discharged home once we are sure you are stable and comfortable. If conscious sedation was given, a sedation nurse will gradually bring you out of sedation and monitor your vital signs.

For 24 hours after sedation (if given), you are deemed to be under the influence of drugs: do NOT drive, run machinery, drink alcohol, smoke, or make final decisions during this time.

Specific Injection Instructions

Prior to (and after) your procedure, you will be given a separate document with education and instructions more specific to your injection procedure (to be provided either via printout or sent to your patient portal). **Please reach out to your provider team if you have not received your specific injection procedure instructions.**