

Epidural analgesia

discharge advice and information for patients



Irving Building
Manchester & Salford
Pain Centre
0161 206 4002



Health & care
information
you can trust

The Information Standard

Certified
Member

Introduction

You have been given this booklet because you have received an epidural infusion for pain relief.

This procedure will have been discussed with you previously by the anaesthetist along with potential problems. Serious problems from epidural infusion, including infection or bleeding are very rare (1 in 10,000).

Because the epidural space is close to the spinal cord, a collection of pus or a blood clot can cause pressure on the spinal cord.

In the unlikely event that there is pressure on the spinal cord it is crucial to diagnose and treat it as quickly as possible.

This must be done by expert hospital doctors to prevent delays in treatment and long lasting damage.

This booklet tells you what to look for and what action to take if you think that you have a problem.

Assessment before the removal of epidural catheter

On completion of your epidural pain treatment, the nurses or doctors will examine you to ensure that you do not have any lasting numbness or weakness in the legs as a result of the action of the epidural drugs.

They will ask you to move your legs and examine you to ensure that the sensation in your legs is as it was before the epidural was placed. It is important to remember that some operations/procedures can cause changes to sensation in the legs.

Therefore, any changes experienced may be as a result of the surgery and not the epidural. If you do have changes in sensation following removal of the epidural, the attending team will discuss this with you.

If as an inpatient, you experience any of the signs and symptoms listed after the epidural has been removed, inform the nurse in charge immediately so that he/she can inform the pain team or on call anaesthetist.

Signs and symptoms

- Redness, pus, tenderness, or pain at the epidural site
- Feeling generally unwell despite the fact that all seems to be well with the surgical wound
- High temperature, neck stiffness
- Numbness and/or weakness in legs; inability to weight bear
- Difficulty in passing water / loss of control of bowels

Very rarely, these symptoms may occur within a few weeks of being discharged. If you develop any of the symptoms above following discharge, it is important that you you are assessed by the hospital team **immediately**.

Contact information

Monday to Friday, 08:00 to 19:00

 **0161 789 7373**

Ask the switchboard operator to bleep the Acute Pain Specialist Nurse. The nurse will then discuss your symptoms and make arrangements for you to be assessed at the hospital as soon as possible by the anaesthetist if appropriate.



All other times

You will need to attend the Accident and Emergency Department for assessment by the on call anaesthetist.

Please bring this booklet with you and show it to the staff in the Accident and Emergency Department.

Further information

For further information on this subject, contact the Pain Specialist Nurse.

 **0161 206 4002**

or telephone hospital switchboard and ask for bleep:

 **07623 623 107**

Acknowledgement

Royal College of Anaesthetists (2009). NAP 3. Report and findings of the 3rd National Audit Project of the Royal College of Anaesthetists.

© G17072804W. Design Services
Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust
All Rights Reserved 2017
This document **MUST NOT** be photocopied

Information Leaflet Control Policy:

Unique Identifier: NOE36(17)

Review Date: August 2019

For further information on this leaflet, it's references and sources used, please contact **0161 206 4002**

Copies of this information are available in other languages and formats upon request.

In accordance with the Equality Act we will make 'reasonable adjustments' to enable individuals with disabilities, to access this treatment / service.

If you need this interpreting please telephone

Polish

Jeżeli potrzebne jest Państwu tłumaczenie, proszę zadzwonić pod numer.

Urdu

اگر آپ کو اس ترجمانی کی ضرورت ہے تو مہربانی کر کے فون کریں۔

Arabic

إذا كنتم بحاجة الى تفسير او ترجمة هذا الرجاء الاتصال

Chinese

如果需要翻译，请拨打电话

Farsi

اگر به ترجمه این نیاز دارید ، لطفاً تلفن کنید

☎ 0161 206 0224

Email: InterpretationandTrans@srft.nhs.uk

Salford Royal operates a smoke-free policy.

For advice on stopping smoking contact the Hospital Specialist Stop Smoking Service on 0161 206 1779

Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust
Stott Lane, Salford,
Manchester,
M6 8HD

Telephone 0161 789 7373
www.srft.nhs.uk

If you would like to become a Foundation Trust Member please visit:

www.srft.nhs.uk/for-members

If you have any suggestions as to how this document could be improved in the future then please visit:

<http://www.srft.nhs.uk/for-patients>