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## Oklahoma Interventional Pain Management

### STEROID INJECTIONS

The purpose of steroid injections is to decrease inflammation, decrease pain, and in some cases, to help determine the source of the pain. These injections are performed using both a local anesthetic and IV sedation to make the procedure more comfortable. Fluoroscopy (x-ray) is used to ensure proper placement of the needle. These procedures should be performed by a physician who has received special training in spinal injections. Each procedure takes approximately 5-10 minutes.

#### Epidural Steroid Injections

Injection of steroid into the epidural space. The epidural space is located outside the dura (covering of the spinal cord.) The space runs the length of the spine. Steroid injected into the epidural space decreases inflammation around the spinal nerves and helps relieve pain.

#### Selective Nerve Root Block

Injection of local anesthetic and steroid medication around a specific nerve root. This procedure is performed to determine if a specific nerve root is the source of pain and to reduce inflammation around the nerve, thereby decreasing pain. The duration of pain relief from the local anesthetic varies from 1 to 6 hours. The steroid may decrease pain by the second or third day. Sometimes this is performed in addition to an epidural steroid injection.

#### Sacroiliac Joint Block

Injection of steroid into the sacroiliac joint. The sacroiliac joint is located at the junction of the sacrum and iliac crest. This joint is the hinge joint between the spine and the pelvis. The steroid decreases inflammation and pain from this joint.

#### Facet Joint Block

Injection of a local anesthetic and steroid into a facet joint. Facet joints are located on the back of the spine on each side where the vertebrae slightly overlap. The joints guide and restrict movement of the spine. A facet joint block is used to confirm that a facet joint is a source of pain and decrease inflammation and pain from the joint.

The number of injections is dependent on a patient's response to the injections. Steroid injections are spaced one to two weeks apart and are often limited to a total of three within six months.