



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Advice following a caudal epidural injection on the Adult Day Surgery Unit

Information for patients

Today you have had an injection around your lumbar spinal nerves. It is called a caudal epidural injection and is performed to relieve the symptoms of spinal nerve compression. The procedure is commonly done under a general anaesthetic (you are asleep) but this is not always the case. This leaflet will give you advice following this procedure.

After an epidural

The drug used in an epidural remains in your body for up to 24 hours after the procedure and over this period you may feel tired and drowsy. It is recommended that you heed the following advice:

- A responsible adult should care for you for at least 24 hours after your discharge home.
- Do not make yourself unreachable – don't lock the bathroom/toilet door etc.
- On the day you are discharged from the Unit remain at home, resting in bed or on the sofa, for the rest of the day.

If you have had a general anaesthetic

- Avoid alcohol for at least 24 hours.
- Do not operate machinery or potentially dangerous equipment, including kettles, cookers etc, for at least 24 hours.
- Do not drive for at least 24 hours.
- Do not sign important documents or make major decisions during this time.
- Following the operation eat a light diet and avoid heavy, fatty foods.

- Remember that it may take 24 hours for the full effects of the anaesthetic to wear off.

What to look out for

It is very unusual for anyone to have problems after having a caudal epidural, but you should contact your GP immediately if you develop any of the following symptoms in the next month:

- New or worsening back pain.
- Numbness, weakness or any altered sensation in your legs.
- Any inability to pass urine or control your bowels.
- A new or different headache, which is worse when sitting or standing up.
- Redness, discharge or pain from the epidural site on your back.
- If you experience any of these symptoms, contact your GP immediately and tell him/her that you have recently had an epidural or caudal.

If there is anything you do not understand or if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to discuss them with your doctor or nurse.

During the first 24 hours following your discharge

If you have any further concerns about your orthopaedic surgery, please telephone Redlands Ward on 0118 322 7485.

Alternatively, for emergencies only, please telephone the Royal Berkshire Hospital switchboard on 0118 322 5111 and ask for the on-call orthopaedic doctor.

After 24 hours, please seek advice from your GP.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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