

Spine & Neuro Pain Specialists

INFORMATION TO KNOW BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE

Spine and Neuro Specialists understands that choosing to undergo a procedure is often a difficult and frightening endeavor. We also realize that it requires a great deal of faith in your doctor, and we thank you for entrusting us with your care. In order to help you feel more comfortable with your decision, we have assembled this information to help address some of your concerns.

Our goal is to provide you with the absolute best care possible, in a safe and courteous manner, while utilizing state of the art technology. We understand that you have many choices regarding your pain management needs, and we appreciate you intrusting us with your care. Dr. Aaron Shores has undergone training in pain management, anesthesiology, physical medicine and rehabilitation, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and advance cardiac life support. He is capable of handling many emergency situations and has over ten years of experience in pain management. Dr. Shores is also board certified and has completed an accredited fellowship training program in interventional pain management. Understanding your doctor's qualifications is only the first step in helping you feel comfortable with your decision. You should know that every reasonable effort will be made to ensure your safety, comfort and quality of care, however no procedure is entirely without risk. Adverse reactions and complications, although rare, can still occur despite our best efforts to avoid them. If you have continued concerns after reading this information, you should discuss them with Dr. Shores, or another member of our clinical staff. There may be alternative treatments available to you.

We make every effort to notify you of any medications that can potentially increase bleeding. We follow the guidelines set by the American Academy of Regional Anesthesia, which recommends that medicines such as clopidogrel (Plavix), warafin (Coumadin), dabigatran (Pradaxa), enoxaparin (Lovenox), and other injectable blood thinners are stopped temporarily prior to certain procedures. Stopping these medicines may carry specific risks. Therefore, you should always discuss stopping these drugs with the prescribing doctor before stopping them. In certain situations, we may also ask to check blood work on you to ensure that your blood is not too thin and that you have the appropriate things in your blood to stop bleeding.

The procedures we offer are designed to decrease your pain, and most procedures are performed close to the spinal cord or a nerve. Therefore, an x-ray like machine, called fluoroscope, is used to help guide the needle whenever possible. This helps improve your safety. If a nerve is inadvertently contacted during a procedure, you may feel pain shoot to another are of your body, typically an arm or leg. If this happens your doctor will reposition his instruments and this pain should go away. Depending on the type of procedure being done, other risks may also occur.

These risks, though extremely rare, include but are not limited to; confusion, paralysis, cardiac arrest (this is a condition where your heart stops beating), seizure, death, shortness of breath and the need for breathing assistance, intubation (this is where a small tube is inserted into your airway to help you breath), pulmonary embolus (this is when a blood clot or other material is transported to the lung) and pneumothorax (collapsed lung). The last two conditions can also cause breathing problems like the ones described above, and pneumothorax may require the surgical insertion of a chest tube (a small plastic tube placed in your chest temporarily to help re-inflate the lung). A spinal headache can occur following certain procedures, most commonly epidural steroid injections. A spinal headache is a severe headache that is worse with head movement and sitting up, and relieved by lying flat on your back. It is thought to result from a small fluid leak from around the spine. If this occurs, it will usually go away on its own in 7-14

days. However, it is often necessary to perform a blood patch to speed up the recovery. This is an injection of your own blood into the epidural space surrounding your spinal cord to stop the fluid leak, and improve your headache in a more timely fashion. The procedure can cause an unexpected increase in pain. If this occurs, it usually is of a short duration. Very rarely, a painful condition called complex regional pain syndrome, or reflex sympathetic dystrophy, can develop and persist indefinitely.

It is possible that the procedure done on you may not be effective. The reason for this is sometimes unknown. Any time a needle is introduced through the skin, whether for a flu shot or one of our procedures, bleeding and infection are always a possibility. To help prevent infection your skin is thoroughly washed and the procedure is done in sterile fashion. This means that your skin is cleaned with a special soap to help reduce the number of bacteria that naturally live on your skin that may cause infection. Sometimes you will be given antibiotics as more of a precautionary measure. Bleeding is minimized because most of our procedures are performed with needles rather than large incisions.

Dr. Shores chooses to perform most of his procedures in a setting where there is a well-trained staff equipped with the latest emergency management equipment and skills. Putting your safety first is our number one priority. We hope that reading this information has helped you make a more informed decision regarding your medical care. We thank you for choosing us for your spine and pain management needs, and we look forward to working with you towards your goal of adding quality back to your life.

Sincerely,

Spine & Neuro Pain Specialists.