

## Patient information

### Post Epidural Infusion / Injection Discharge Advice

#### Pain Medicine

#### Introduction

Serious complications from epidural analgesia are 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 leaflet 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

At the end of treatment with your epidural infusion the team of doctors and nurses caring for you will examine you to ensure that you do not have any residual numbness or weakness of your legs from the action of the drugs in your epidural infusion.

They will ask you to move your legs and examine you to make sure that the sensation in your legs is as it was before the operation. It is important to remember that some operations can cause altered sensation in the legs therefore any changes experienced may be as a result of the surgery and not the epidural. If you do have altered sensation when the epidural is removed, the attending team can discuss this with you.

If you experience any of the listed signs and symptoms (see list below) as a new problem, after your epidural infusion has been stopped as an inpatient ask the nurse in charge of the ward to contact the Pain Team or on call Anaesthetist immediately.

**If you have been discharged it is important that you contact the on-call Anaesthetist at the hospital immediately:**

❖ **Aintree Hospital**

**Tel:** 0151 525 5980 **Text Phone:** 18001 0151 525 5980 and ask the switchboard operator to bleep the On-Call Anaesthetist.

❖ **Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen Hospitals**

**Tel:** 0151 706 2000 **Text phone number:** 18001 0151 706 2000 and ask the switchboard operator to bleep the On-Call Anaesthetist.

After speaking to the on-call Anaesthetist they will arrange to see you in the Accident and Emergency department in order to examine you.

## **Signs and symptoms**

- Redness, pus, tenderness, or pain at the epidural wound 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 your legs / inability to weight bear.
- Difficulty passing water / incontinence of faeces.

## **Feedback**

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

## **Further Information**

**For further information during your admission your ward nurse can contact the Pain Nurse Specialist who can discuss your care.**

**Following your discharge to contact the Specialist Nurses  
Monday to Friday 8am to 4 pm please Telephone:**

### **❖ Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen Hospitals**

**Tel: 0151 706 2000 and ask switchboard operator to Bleep 4531**

**Text Phone Number: 18001 0151 706 2000 - Bleep 4531**

### **❖ Aintree Hospital**

**Tel: 0151 529 5980 and ask the switchboard operator to Bleep: 2214**

**Text phone number: 18001 0151 529 5980 - Bleep 2214**

## **Information for the Emergency Department Staff**

**Contact the on-call anaesthetist as soon as the patient attends the  
Emergency Department**

**Author: Pain Medicine Service, Liverpool University Hospitals NHS  
Foundations Trust**

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## Acknowledgements:

Major complications of central Neuraxial block in the United Kingdom (Report of the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Audit Project of the Royal College of Anaesthetists–NAP 3) Patient Information Leaflet  
The Royal College of Anaesthetists

All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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