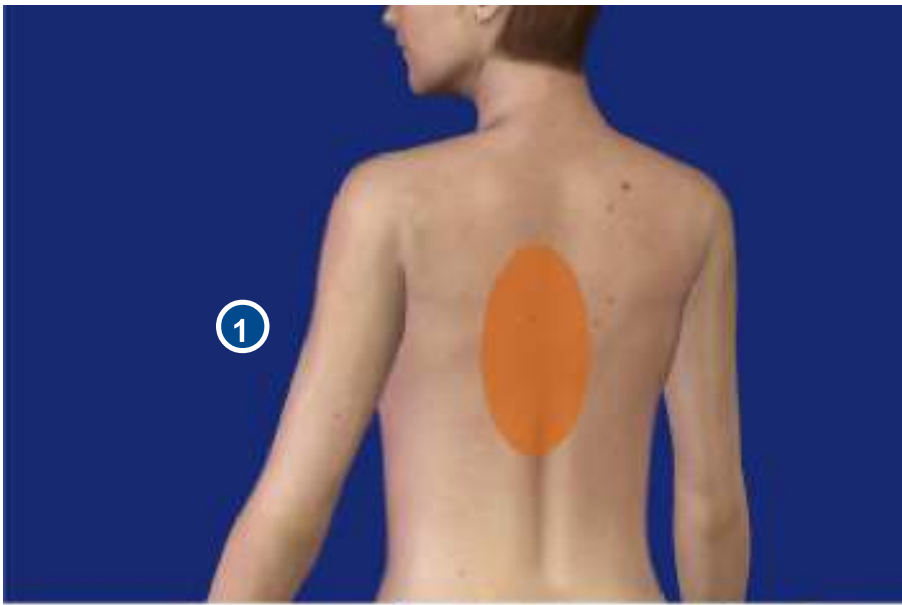


THORACIC TRANSFORAMINAL EPIDURAL STEROID INJECTION



This injection procedure relieves pain in the upper back, ribs, and abdomen caused by a pinched nerve (or nerves) in the thoracic spine.

1. Preparation

The procedure is performed with the patient lying on the stomach. A region of skin and tissue of the back is numbed with an injection of local anesthetic.

2. Inserting the Needle

The physician uses an x-ray device called a fluoroscope to guide a needle to the painful area of the spine. The needle is inserted into the neural foramen space, the region through which spinal nerves travel.

Confirming the Needle Placement

Contrast dye is injected into the space to make sure the needle is properly positioned near the irritated nerve or nerves.

3. Injecting the Medication

A combination of an anesthetic and cortisone steroid solution is injected into the foramen space. The steroid is an anti-inflammatory medication that is absorbed by the inflamed nerves to decrease swelling and relieve pressure.

End of Procedure and After Care

The needle is removed and a small bandage is applied. Extended pain relief usually begins within two to three days of the injection. Some patients may need only one injection, but two or three injections may be needed to provide significant pain relief.

