

What symptoms to look out for after having an epidural for pain relief

Information for patients, relatives
and carers

Introduction

While you have been in hospital you have had an epidural infusion which not only provides pain relief but also helps you recover after an operation or injury.

Very rarely, patients can experience problems after having an epidural infusion, such as bleeding or infection. These complications may be delayed for up to two or three weeks after the epidural was inserted and can, therefore, occur after you have left hospital.

Symptoms you may experience and what actions you need to take

Please go to A&E immediately if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- severe back pain near the epidural insertion site
- weakness or increasing numbness in your legs
- new loss of bladder or bowel control

Please take this leaflet with you to A&E.

If you would like advice from our pain service please call 020 3311 1000 then type the relevant bleep number:

- Charing Cross Hospital – 4001
- Hammersmith Hospital – 5461
- St Mary's Hospital – 1043

You can contact our pain service between 08.30 and 16.30 Monday to Friday. Out of hours please call NHS 111.

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross, Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea hospitals), or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals). You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street, London W2 1NY.

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team: imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk

Pain management
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