



Intrathecal pump trial injection

What is an intrathecal pump trial injection?

An intrathecal pump trial injection is a diagnostic injection of pain medication that helps relieve pain temporarily, commonly due to cancer or chronic pain syndromes prior to intrathecal pump delivery system implantation.

The intrathecal space or subarachnoid space is an area of the spinal canal used to access the cerebral spinal fluid. Injecting pain medication in the intrathecal space can help you stop feeling pain.

How is an intrathecal pump trial done?

First, you'll lie on your stomach on an x-ray table.

The doctor will numb an area of skin on your back with a local anesthetic. Then, guided by an x-ray, he or she will:

- Insert a thin needle into your back to access the intrathecal space, and inject pain medication
- Usually, the procedure takes less than 15- 20 minutes, and you can go home the same day.

After the procedure is completed, you will remain in the post procedure area, a post procedure staff will connect you to monitors, monitoring your blood pressure, oxygen saturation, and heart rate as well as monitoring for side effects from the pain medication for 4-6 hours.

The post procedure staff will also be assessing the effectiveness of pain relief from the intrathecal injection while in the post procedure area.

How effective is an intrathecal pump trial injection?

How long the pain relief last is different for each person, lasting 4-6 hours or the entire day and you can return to their normal activities.

What are the risks?

The risk of complication from an intrathecal injection are very low. However, there could be bruising or soreness at the injection site. Serious complications, including infection, post dural

puncture headache, respiratory depression, urinary retention, constipation, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, injury to the spinal cord, nerve damage and bleeding, are uncommon. Side effects can include low blood pressure and drowsiness

What happens after the procedure?

You may feel drowsy, but this feeling will subside when the pain medication wears off. You can continue your regular diet and medications immediately, but do not drive or do any rigorous activity for 24 hours after the procedure. Take it easy. You can return to your normal activities the next day.

The intrathecal injection of pain medication may last several hours to a day.

Is an intrathecal pump trial injection right for you?

An intrathecal pump trial injection may be right for you if you have chronic intractable pain — especially linked to cancers — which does not respond to other pain medication. There's a better chance of a block relieving your pain if you have the procedure earlier in your illness. Talk to your physician about your symptoms and he/she will help decide what is right for you.