

ASK THE CHIROPRACTOR

Epidural injections rarely work

Question: I have had low-back pain with sciatica for six months. I tried chiropractic, physical therapy and oral medications and nothing has helped. My pain-management doctor suggested a series of three epidural injections and I really thought this should kill the pain. They didn't work either. Why wouldn't even epidural injections work to help my pain?

Answer: Your question is one I hear every day. Most physicians that utilize epidural injections will communicate to their patients that the anti-inflammatory and painkiller agents will only sustain temporary relief. My clinical experience with consulting more than 1,000 different patients whom received these injections is that they rarely reduce pain and rarely remove any symptoms of low-back pain or sciatica.

A study that was published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* was titled "Epidural Injections: No Significant Benefit for Sciatica." This article in June of 1999 concluded that epidural-corticosteroid injections commonly used for low-back pain and sciatica had not established any efficacy. The article claimed that some patients received short-term pain relief but it did not reduce the need for surgery.

Patients such as you, with excruciating low-back pain and sciatica that get no relief have had very few options in the past. Today there are more options.

Chiropractic has evolved to have more scientific and specific treatments for low-back pain. Acupuncture has been a great source of pain relief for many patients. Deep myofascial massage can be very effective to reduce muscle spasms. The Beachwood Low Back Rehab Center offers a non-invasive treatment for low-back conditions called VAX-D therapy, which is 75-percent successful. You can learn more about this treatment and others at their Web site, www.beachwoodlowback.com.

Quote of the week: “Many hands and hearts and minds generally contribute to anyone’s notable achievements.” – Walt Disney