

PAIN MANAGEMENT FOR Spinal Nerve Compression

M IDWEST SPINE INSTITUTE offers a variety of conservative pain management options to aid your patients who are suffering from leg or arm pain due to spinal nerve compression.

Spinal nerve compression can be caused by a herniated disc, arthritis or spinal cord instability. Often, depending on the nerve's location, patients may experience sharp lower back or neck pain and numbness or tingling that radiates throughout the patient's upper and lower extremities.

At Midwest Spine Institute, based in Stillwater, MN, conservative treatment options, including physical therapy and a variety of injections designed to provide pain relief, are stressed before surgical intervention.

"We are prepared to offer patients any conservative methods that might help prevent the need for surgery," says Daniel Hanson, M.D., board-certified spine surgeon on staff at Midwest Spine Institute. "Although the severity of the case may warrant more extensive interventions, depending on each patient's individual needs, conservative options may provide adequate symptom relief."

Conservative Pain Management Techniques

Epidural steroid injections contain a local anesthetic and steroid medication, which help to reduce pain, swelling and inflammation of the affected nerves. Often, the local anesthetic provides instantaneous relief, while the steroid provides extended pain relief.

While the types of medication administered do not change, there are several types of epidural steroid injections available based on the injection site and targeted nerves. The most commonly performed steroid injection in the lumbar spine includes a selective nerve root injection.

Selective nerve root injection is a form of transforaminal epidural steroid injection that delivers medication directly to the region of the affected nerve root sheath. Selective nerve root injections can be performed for both therapeutic and diagnostic reasons. If the injection is performed as part of a diagnostic test, only a local anesthetic will be injected. This local anesthetic will block the nerve roots from receiving pain signals, helping to determine exactly which nerve roots have been affected. When used for therapeutic purposes, steroid medication is included.

Caudal epidural steroid injections specifically target the lower spine near the coccyx and sacrum.

Based on each patient's individual needs, a referral to a pain



Daniel Hanson, M.D., board-certified spine surgeon on staff at Midwest Spine Institute

management specialist or physical therapist may also be warranted, and if a patient's neurological condition is worsening or optimal pain management has not been achieved, surgery may be indicated. Minimally invasive surgical options, such as microdiscectomies for the treatment of bulging or herniated discs, or lumbar fusions are available for certain patients at Midwest Spine Institute. Candidacy for minimally invasive surgery will be determined based on the patient's specific condition, as well as the location of the affected nerves and the patient's body frame.

Midwest Spine Institute has locations in Blaine, Burnsville, Stillwater, Fridley and Vadnais Heights. To refer your patient, visit www.midwestspineinstitute.com and click on the "Make a Direct Referral" option under the "For Providers" tab.