

EPIDURAL INJECTION USE FOR LOW BACK PAIN ASSOCIATED WITH SCIATICA AT AN ORTHOPAEDIC CENTRE IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To assess the effects of lumbar epidural steroid injections in patients with radiculopathy (sciatica), by assessing reduction of pain at short term (3 weeks) and intermediate term (12 weeks).

Design: This was a prospective study done between August 2005 and July 2011 at Kikuyu Orthopaedic and Rehabilitation Centre in Kenya involving 121 patients.

Methods: Patient selection was consecutive as the need for the epidural injection arose or was found necessary. After the epidural injection, patients were followed up for 12 weeks.

Results: Of those followed up to the end, 58% reported significant pain reduction at 12 weeks. Four patients had a repeat injection and two patients ended up being operated on.

Conclusion: Epidural steroid injection reduces pain in the majority of well selected patients with low back pain associated with radiculopathy. This seems to be short lived though. There is need for this patients to be followed up longer.