

Epidural Anesthesia

Anesthesia Safety

Before your surgery:

- Follow the instructions you have been given about how long not to eat or drink before your procedure.
- Be sure your doctor knows what medication and drugs you take. This includes over-the-counter medication, herbs, supplements, alcohol or other drugs. You will be asked when those were last taken.

After your surgery:

- Have an adult family member or friend drive you home after the procedure.
- Take care of your catheter while moving or positioning yourself in bed.
- For the first 24 hours after your surgery:
 - Do not drive or use heavy equipment.
 - Have someone stay with you, if possible. They can watch for problems and help keep you safe.



Pre- Admission Anesthesia clinic

- ☎ Hamad General hospital: 44391388
- ☎ Ambulatory Care Centre: 40263748

Patient and Family Education

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Epidural Anesthesia

What is epidural anesthesia?

An epidural anesthesia consists of injecting an anesthetic agent into the nerves in your back close to your spine. It numbs or causes a loss of feeling in the lower half of your body.

An epidural block may also be used to reduce pain during and after surgery in the lower back.

How is pain blocked?

The spinal cord is the main pathway for pain signals. These signals travel from nerves in your body through the spinal cord to your brain. The brain registers them as pain. The epidural blocks the nerves that enter your lower spine.

What do you expect after receiving an epidural anesthetic?

Temporary decrease or loss of feeling and/or movement to the lower part of the body

How is an epidural anesthetic administered?

- You will be asked to sit up or lie on your side. You will be helped to bend forwards, curving your back as much as you can;
- A small injection of local anesthetic is given to numb the skin.
- An anesthetist uses a needle to place a fine plastic tube (an epidural catheter) into the epidural space (in the middle of your lower back). The needle is removed, leaving only the catheter in your back.



- Medicine will be given through the epidural catheter to numb, or block feeling in a certain part of your body so that you cannot feel pain.
- The medicine begins to take effect in about 10 to 20 minutes. A sensation of warmth and numbness gradually develops.
- The epidural (catheter) is often left in place so you can receive medication to control the pain after your procedure.

Anesthesia tools and medications

- Local anesthetic is given through a needle which numbs the skin where the epidural will be inserted.
- A needle is used to insert a fine plastic tube (epidural catheter) which will then be removed.
- Electrocardiography leads (electrodes) record your heart rate and rhythm.
- A blood pressure cuff monitors your blood pressure.
- A pulse oximeter clips onto the end of your finger and measures your blood oxygen level.
- Sedatives may be given through an IV to relax you and keep you comfortable. You may stay awake or sleep lightly.

- Oxygen may be given to you through a facemask.

After the procedure

- The catheter in your back may be left in place for two days to relieve your pain.
- Feeling and movement will return to normal when the epidural is stopped.
- Once the catheter is removed other pain relief medication may be given.



Very common	Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drop in blood pressure• Inability to pass urine• Itching• Nausea and vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your anesthetist will use fluids and drugs to correct it.• A catheter (tube) is inserted into the bladder to drain away the urine• Anti-histamine drugs can be given.• Medicine can be given to make you feel better.
Common	Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Headache	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medication can be given to make you feel better
Uncommon	Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slow breathing• Nerve damage: temporary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oxygen can be given to make you feel better.• Gets better after a few days, weeks or month
Rare or very rare	Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nerve damage: permanent• Catheter infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Antibiotics may be necessary