

The Mercy Hospital
Department of Anesthesiology and Pain Management
Epidural Blood Patch Patient Instructions

You have had an Epidural Blood Patch to treat your spinal headache. A Post Dural Puncture Headache (commonly called a “spinal or post-spinal headache”) may occur after a procedure such as a spinal anesthetic, insertion of an epidural catheter, a diagnostic spinal tap or medication injection, or a myelogram. After these procedures there may be a leaking of spinal fluid through a small hole in the membrane (dura) which covers the spinal cord and spinal fluid. This can cause a headache. An epidural blood patch is the injection of a small amount of your own blood into the epidural space which is just outside the membrane (dura) where the spinal fluid leak is located. This blood clots and forms a seal (patch) over the hole, stopping the leak. An epidural blood patch results in prompt relief of the headache in the majority of patients. Occasionally the headache is not relieved, or the headache can return (usually within one or two days). Another epidural blood patch may be recommended if this occurs.

Please follow these instructions to achieve optimal relief of your headache:

- Remain lying down for two hours after the procedure.
- After two hours you can resume activity but please spend most of the next 24 hours resting in a chair/bed.
- Do not return to work for 24 hours
- Do not do any lifting or straining for two days.
- Drink a lot of fluids.

Call our office for the following:

- If your headache returns or is not relieved
- If you have a fever over 101 degrees
- If there is drainage, redness or swelling at the injection site in your back
- If you have new or severe back pain or neck pain
- If you have new weakness or numbness in your legs
- If you have difficulty voiding or loose control of your bowel or bladder
- Please call if you have any questions or concerns:

Mercy Hospital switchboard 207-879-3000. Ask for the Anesthesiologist-On-Call.