You may feel weakness and/or numbness in your arms, chest wall or legs. This may develop an hour or so after the procedure and last for several hours. This is quite common.

You should not drive for 24 hours after the injection (your insurance may not be valid if you have an accident)

The dressing can be removed the morning after the procedure and then you can wet the area. No dressing is needed after this.

We advise gentle physical activity for 24-48 hours after the procedure. If your job is physical, up to five days of gentle activity is sensible. If you work at a desk, you can return within 48 hours. It may take up to six weeks to see the full benefit of the procedure.

Are there any risks?

There are many blood vessels in the neck. If one is accidentally punctured, we will stop the procedure and a new appointment will be made for another attempt.

The injection may not provide any relief of your symptoms. Patients are often disappointed if there is no pain relief, but the information that is gained can still be very helpful.

Unfortunately, you won’t know until after the procedure whether it has helped or not.

You may develop a headache which should settle with simple painkillers within 24 hours. If not, seek medical help.

Other risks are rarer and include:

- Infection – contact your GP if you experience any redness or tenderness at the injection site
- Bleeding/haematoma (a bruise under skin)
- An allergic reaction - please inform the doctor if you have any allergies
- Temporary worsening of pain
- Nerve injury (1 in 20 000)
- There is a very small risk of stroke and spinal cord damage causing temporary or permanent paralysis
- The procedure uses x-rays to confirm that the needle is in the correct place. The amount of radiation used is small, however female patients who are or who may be pregnant should inform the department before attending the appointment.

Further information

If you have any questions regarding the reasons for this procedure, please contact the Spinal orthopaedic team on (01823 343940 / 01823 344825).

If you have any queries after the procedure, please contact the x-ray Department on 01823 343038 or the Spinal orthopaedic team.
**Introduction**
This information leaflet is for patients who are going to have a CT-guided cervical nerve root injection. We hope it gives you a better understanding of what the procedure involves. It may not answer all of your questions and if you do have any concerns, please do not hesitate to ask or contact us.

**What is a CT–guided nerve root injection?**
A cervical nerve root injection (or cervical nerve root block) is an injection of local anaesthetic and steroid (anti-inflammatory) medication around a nerve in the neck as it leaves the spine.

**Why am I having this?**
Your specialist thinks that the symptoms in your neck or arm are due to irritation of a nerve by a damaged disc or bony spur (growth). The aim of the injection is to find out if this nerve is the source of your symptoms and to relieve those symptoms by reducing inflammation around the nerve.

**How do I prepare for a nerve root block?**
- There is no preparation for this procedure; you can continue to eat and drink as normal
- If you are diabetic please inform the doctor before the examination as there is a possibility that your sugar levels will vary after the injection. It is important that you continue to monitor your levels carefully for three days after the procedure and consult your GP if necessary.
- If you are taking any blood thinning tablets which include anti-platelets for example: Aspirin, Clopidogrel, or anti-coagulants for example: Warfarin Dabigatran, Rivaroxaban and Apixaban, please contact the spinal department before the appointment, as you may need to seek advice from your GP before undergoing this test.

**The procedure**
- The procedure is performed in the CT-scanner (X-ray department) by a specialist consultant radiologist
- It is an outpatient procedure which means you will arrive shortly before the procedure and allowed home 15-30 minutes after it has finished. You should expect to be in the hospital for 1½ hours.
- You should not drive after the procedure and we advise you to bring someone with you

**What happens when I arrive for the procedure?**
- Please report to the main reception area in the Diagnostic Imaging X-ray Department. Our receptionist will check your personal details such as name and date of birth on the computer. We will ask you to take a seat in our waiting area.
- A CT radiographer will call you through to a changing cubicle and ask you to change into a gown
- The consultant radiologist will then see you and talk to you about the procedure and confirm you have read this leaflet and understood it. He/she will explain the procedure and answer any questions you have.
- You will be asked to sign a consent form.

The procedure is performed without general anaesthesia and without sedation, however, a local anaesthetic will be used.
- You will then be taken into the CT scanning room and asked to lie on the scanner couch either on your back or side. It is important that you are comfortable as you will need to stay in that position for about 15 minutes.
- All staff will leave the scanning room whilst preliminary scans are performed. The couch will move you in and out of the scanner several times. This provides the images to help the consultant radiologist plan the procedure.
- The radiologist and a radiographer will spend the rest of the procedure in the scanning room with you.
- An area of your skin will be marked and cleaned with antiseptic solution, which may feel cold.
- The radiologist will direct a fine needle towards the specific nerve in several steps. Between each step the couch will move you into the scanner to check the position of the needle.
- To ensure appropriate needle position, a small amount of x-ray contrast (dye) is injected. You will then have a small injection of local anaesthetic and steroid.
- We will clean your neck and place a dry dressing over the puncture site.

**After the procedure**
- You can change back into your clothes and will stay in the recovery room for 30 minutes after the procedure