



# The Spinal Column

## Epidurials: God sent for some; nightmare for others

By Dr. Alfin Mitha, Hons. B.Sc., D.C.

### What is an Epidural Anesthesia?

An Epidural is an injection into the space outside the dura or outer membrane of your spinal cord. It can be done as an injection or as a continuous drip so less drug is used. When properly administered, it can feel like liquid ice numbing your stomach, buttocks and legs. It is never administered if the mother has had any bleeding.

### Who Does it?

A board certified Anesthesiologist is the only individual that can do an epidural. He or she must do so under sterile conditions.

### How Long Does it Take?

An epidural takes approximately a ½ hour to set up and begin working. You need to be either sitting up or curled into a ball on your side when you decide to have it done. Please keep in mind that it passes into the baby within 10 minutes and the effects are unknown. If the effects on a grown woman are a loss of feeling from waist down, what severe effects could it have on the baby? You also remain conscious, as well an epidural can be used as the anesthetic for C-sections. Other than these, there is not much advantage to it.

### Disadvantages to the Epidural

1. Some hospitals offer no choice for 1st time moms and epidurals
2. Epidurals prolong labor by 2.3 hours so oxytocin is used to combat this which causes even more side effects.
3. The failure rate is where the Anesthesiologist misses the subdura and injects into the dura. This is called a "Full Spinal" and results in a more heavily anesthetized mom who can have a bad HA for up to a week.

4. Epidurals lower BP severely in 39% of women and 47% of women when used with oxytocin for up to 1 hour.

5. Epidurals sometimes make you feel sick, faint and may make you vomit.

6. Epidurals, when decreasing the mom's blood pressure, will cause less oxygen to go to the baby. To combat this, hospitals will increase their IV drip which will increase the mom's blood volume assisting the blood pressure but causing water intoxication and swelling of the limbs for several days afterward.

7. Since your blood pressure is low, fetal monitoring will have to be done to make sure the baby is ok which comes with its own set of side effects.

8. **Epidurals increase the chance of C-sections, especially** if given before the mom is 5cm dilated.

9. When choosing an epidural you must also realize that a Catheter must be used because you can't feel anything below your waist, therefore you can't control your bladder.

10. In all likelihood when using an epidural the Dr will use forceps to rotate the baby's head because you have no urge to push and the baby will be more likely to be in deep transverse arrest occiput posterior because natural tone of pelvic muscles are lost. If you don't push until the baby's head is seen, it will reduce this.

11. With epidurals, your temperature rises. The protocol in hospitals when this happens is to treat the baby for infection "just in case there is an infection". The best place to get an infection is in a hospital. They will isolate your baby for two days, do a septic work up, which is quite traumatic to your baby. They will also put your baby on antibiotics through IV, and isolate him/her for two days while they wait for the culture.

12. The long term effects of epidurals are: back aches, migraines and numb areas for years to life. Whether you get an epidural is up to you, but the after effects of it on you and your baby could be lifelong and it is a decision not to be taken lightly.

## About the Author:



As a life-long resident of Brampton (34 years), Dr. Alfin Mitha endeavors to provide this city with reliable, informative Chiropractic care. He lives here with his 2 kids, Aura and Zen, and his wife Rupi. Having completed his Bachelor of Science degree in both Biology and Pharmacology at McMaster University, Dr. Mitha had the opportunity to work with Eli Lilly pharmaceuticals in their Research and Development of Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer and Prozac. Deciding that the private sector in medicine was not for him, Dr. Mitha then took one year off to work in Ixtapa, Mexico as a land sports G.O for Club Med. Having considered Chiropractic in the past, it was only confirmed while having the chance to meet many Chiropractors during his time in Ixtapa.

The next part of his journey took him to the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College in Toronto, Ontario. During his education, he still maintained an active physical lifestyle while working as a personal trainer. His internship year provided him the opportunity to work at 2 very different and unique places. The first part of his internship was at Anishnawbe Health and Native Wellness Center which serviced much of Toronto's aboriginal and homeless community. The second part of his internship allowed him the chance to treat players of the Canadian National Soccer Team, and other elite Canadian athletes. Both of these placements allowed Dr. Mitha to understand many aspects of illness, injury and health. A focus which remains in his clinic; In GoodHands.

Having returned back to Brampton (a resident of 34 years, he has since become an active member of the Rotary Club, Brampton Tennis Club, Brampton Volleyball League, Yoga instructor and more recently the Health Practitioner Advisory Committee for the city. Dr. Mitha wishes to become a more integral part of Brampton's community. "It is imperative that we take care of our body and mind, it is our most valuable asset. The first step is education and if anything else, we provide that for our patients".

## Main and Franchise Clinics:



### In GoodHands Rehabilitation & Wellness Centre

Bramalea City Centre – Inside GoodLife Fitness  
Unit 50A - 25 Peel Centre Drive, Brampton, ON L6T 3R5  
**Phone:** (905) 453-5858      **Fax:** (905) 453-8995  
**Email:** info@ingoodhandswellness.com

#### Services:

- Acupuncture
- Chiropractic Care
- Massage Therapy
- Naturopathic Medicine
- Orthotics
- Physiotherapy

#### Products:

- Athletic Braces & Splints
- Compression Stockings
- Memory Foam Pillows
- Custom Made Orthotics
- Health Supplements

#### Clinic Hours:

Mon. and Wed.: 9:30 am - 8:30 pm  
Tues. and Thurs.: 10:00 am - 9:00 pm  
Fri.: 9:30 am - 7:00 pm  
Sat.: 9:30 am - 2:30 pm  
Sun.: Closed

### In GreatHands Chiropractic & Wellness Centre

Inside Oshawa Centre Mall  
C/O Goodlife, 419 King Street West, Oshawa, ON L1J 2K5  
**Phone:** (905) 433-9520      **Fax:** (905) 433-8144  
**Email:** oshawa@ingreathands.com

#### Services:

- Chiropractic Care
- Dry Blood Analysis
- Hair Analysis
- Irridology
- Massage Therapy
- Nutritional Urinalysis
- Orthotics
- Psychology
- Reflexology
- Rehabilitation
- X-Rays

#### Products:

- Custom Made Orthotics
- Health Supplements

#### Clinic Hours:

Mon. - Thurs.: 9:00 am - 7:30 pm  
Fri.: 9:00 am - 7:00 pm  
Sat.: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm  
Sun.: Closed