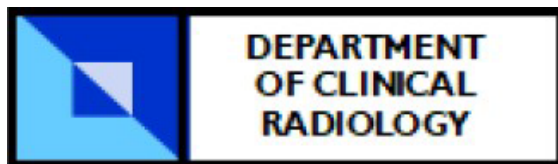


A guide to your vertebroplasty

Information for patients



This information booklet is a summary designed to give you a brief overview of what the procedure involves. This is not a replacement for discussing the procedure and risks with your doctor and you and your family should feel free to ask any questions.

What is a vertebroplasty?

Vertebroplasty is a procedure carried out to relieve pain caused by compression fractures of the spine which have been affected by another disease that you may have (e.g. Osteoporosis) or even an accident you have had.

The procedure involves injecting a substance called 'bone cement' into the affected bone in your spine - called a vertebra. This reinforces the weakened part of the bone which helps prevent further compression. The cement is injected by a consultant radiologist and is performed under x-ray.

This procedure can be carried out under either general anaesthetic or using a sedation (that will make you sleepy but not fully asleep). This will be discussed with you in our out-patient clinic before you have the procedure.

Why do I need one and what happens first?

You will have been referred by your doctor to our consultant radiologist who carries out the procedure. This will hopefully reduce your pain and improve your mobility, but the effect of the procedure varies individually.

You will receive an out-patient clinic appointment to speak to our consultant who will explain the procedure, and the risks involved. You are encouraged to ask as many questions as you have. For any further concerns and queries, you can contact our department on the number provided below.

Once you have agreed to proceed with treatment, we will organise an admission date which may be a few weeks. You will receive the date through the post as soon as we have booked you in.

If you are taking any blood thinning tablets (e.g. Warfarin) please make sure that the consultant radiologist is aware either in clinic or by telephoning our department afterwards. This may have an impact on your vertebroplasty arrangements.

What happens when I come to hospital?

You will be admitted to hospital on the day of your procedure or the night before. Your letter will give you the exact dates and instructions. You will be admitted under the care of the consultant you discussed the procedure with in the clinic.

If you are coming the day of the procedure you will be asked to attend a pre-admission clinic a few days before to have an overview of your health by a team of nurses and a doctor. Blood tests and a trace of your heart will be done if required.

If you are admitted to hospital the night before, this overview will be done on your arrival. There is a team on the ward of doctors and nurses that will look after you. However, it will be the consultant radiologist who you met in clinic who will carry out the procedure. They will come and see you before and afterwards. Please do not hesitate to ask if you have any worries about this arrangement.

You will also be asked to sign a consent form before the procedure by the consultant radiologist. You should feel happy and satisfied that all your concerns and questions have been answered, and any risks involved have been explained before signing the form.

You should not to eat or drink the night before the procedure because you are having either a general anaesthetic or sedation. You will meet our anaesthetist on the ward to discuss any medical conditions you have which might concern you or your anaesthetist. Please free to ask any questions or let them know any worries you have at this point.

How long does the procedure take and what happens afterwards?

The procedure usually takes approximately 1 hour, but let your family know that you will be away for approximately 2 hours, as you will spend some time in our recovery area.

After you leave our recovery area you will go back to the ward where you will lie flat for 2 hours. You may be sleepy when you first arrive on the ward and the staff will only disturb you to take your blood pressure, pulse, oxygen saturation and temperature. You will be given a 'buzzer' in case you need the toilet or any painkillers. You can eat and drink normally at this point. Your consultant will have given the ward instructions of when you are able to get out of bed and an approximate time that you can go home. They will come and see you before you leave to allow you to ask any questions about your procedure or going home.

Going home

If there are no problems, you will be allowed to go home later in the day. You must not drive or use public transport. Please arrange for an adult to come to take you home by car or taxi and they should be able to stay with you at home overnight. If you have any problems with getting home, please contact our department **before your admission date**.

You may require painkillers when you get home. This should be what you normally take for a headache or pain. You should not need stronger tablets than you normally take.

Radiation risk

To guide us during the procedure we use x-rays. The benefits of using x-ray guidance are thought to outweigh the very low risk from the x-rays themselves. However, if you think you may be pregnant, please contact the department before you are admitted so we can discuss this with you.

Every day we are exposed to some natural background radiation from the air we breathe, the food we eat, the environment we live in and even from flying on a plane. Each medical x-ray gives us a small additional dose on top of this natural background radiation. It is important to say that the number of x-rays used will carry a low risk of effects from radiation.

Contact details

Should you have any concerns regarding the procedure or the use of x-rays in the meantime please contact:

0131 312 0863

Keeping your appointment

If you cannot keep your appointment, or have been given one that is unsuitable, please let us know on the above telephone number. Your call will give someone else the chance to be treated and will help us keep waiting times to a minimum.

Public transport and travel information

Bus details available from:

- **Lothian Buses** on **0131 555 6363** or www.lothianbuses.co.uk
- **Traveline Scotland** on **08712002233** or www.travelinescotland.com

Train details available from:

- **National Rail Enquiries** on **03457 484 950** or www.nationalrail.co.uk

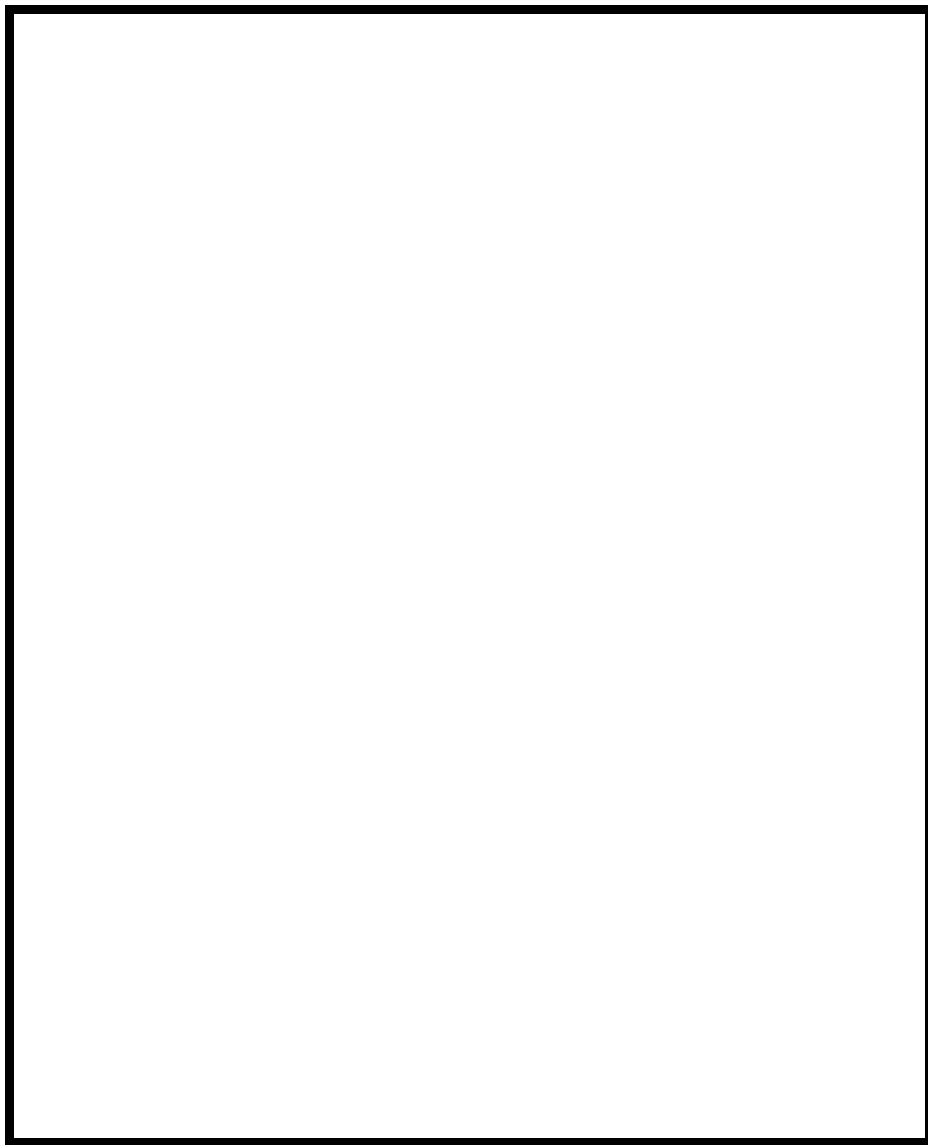
Patient transport

Patient Transport will only be made available if you have a medical/clinical need. Telephone **0300 123 1236** *calls charged at local rate up to 28 days in advance to book, making sure you have your CHI Number available. Hard of hearing or speech Impaired? Use text relay: **18001-0300 123 1236*** (calls charged at local rate). To cancel patient transport, telephone 0800 389 1333 (Freephone 24 hr answer service).

Interpretation and translation

Your GP will inform us of any interpreting requirements you have before you come to hospital and we will provide an appropriate interpreter. If you are having this procedure as an existing in-patient, staff will arrange interpreting support for you in advance of this procedure. This leaflet may be made available in a larger print, Braille or your community language.

Notes

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