

# Epidural Injections Block Pain Receptors

**A patient living with chronic pain is struck with even greater agony from an old accident injury. A comprehensive team approach addresses this new source of pain decisively.**

## Southwest Florida Rehab & Pain Management Associates

James P. Weiner, MD  
Robert D. Mehrberg, MD  
Peter S. Schreiber, DO  
Keith S. Susko, MD  
Pierre R. Hyppolite, MD

Bob Mountjoy knows what it's like to live with intractable pain.

"I was in a car accident in 1995, and that accident left me with a number of problems that require pretty strong pain medication just to keep me going," says Bob. "I had neck surgery and a bone graft years back, so most of my pain since then has centered on my lower back, but not long ago I started having shoulder pain. My pain management doctor, Dr. Pierre Hyppolite at Southwest Florida Rehab and Pain Management Associates, determined that I had developed arthritis at the site of my graft. I also have a torn rotator cuff that's not helping anything."

Bob's neck and shoulder pain broke through his pain medications and kept him awake at night. "I couldn't roll over on my shoulder without the pain waking me up," he describes, "and even if I didn't roll over, sometimes the pain was so unbearable that it woke me up anyway."

During the day, Bob's arms felt weak and he found himself dropping things without warning.

"I generally felt bad," he adds. "Make that 'miserable.' Now, I know I'm getting older, but at sixty-two, I'm still young enough that I think I ought to feel better than that."

When Bob described his increasing neck and shoulder pain to Dr. Hyppolite, his trusted doctor referred him to James P. Weiner, MD, one of his practice colleagues. Dr. Hyppolite thought Bob could benefit from the placement of epidural steroid injections (ESIs) to interrupt the pain signals that traveled his nerves' pathways.

Despite his confidence in Dr. Hyppolite, Bob admits he was skeptical about the use of ESIs. "I had injections placed in my lower back and neck a

number of years ago, at another practice, and I didn't get any relief from those injections. I wasn't really thrilled with the experience, either," says Bob. "Dr. Hyppolite was confident that Dr. Weiner would offer me a better result, though, so I decided to try injections one more time."

### Well-placed trust

Dr. Weiner is the only physician in southwest Florida board-certified in both physical medicine/ rehabilitation and anesthesiology, giving him a unique perspective when he develops a treatment plan to address a patient's persistent pain.

"I've also had a number of back surgeries myself, so I can relate to my patients' hopes for effective pain relief very well," says Dr. Weiner. "I understand exactly what they're going through."

Despite Bob's earlier dissatisfaction with epidural steroid injections, Dr. Weiner felt Bob was a good candidate for success, thanks to the practice's comprehensive approach to identifying and treating pain.

Dr. Weiner notes that there are no guarantees in pain management because each patient reacts differently to treatment. What works for one patient may not work for another. With that in mind, all the physicians at Southwest Florida Rehab and Pain Management Associates take a comprehensive approach to alleviating each patient's pain, beginning with the most conservative methods first.

"Only after conservative approaches fail to bring adequate relief do we consider surgical remedies, via the board-certified neurosurgeons at Southwest Florida Neurosurgical Associates," assures Dr. Weiner. "I was glad when Bob agreed to allow me to try ESIs on his persistent neck pain."

Bob is glad he shook off his hesitation, as well. "These injections really 'hit the spot,' and I am tickled to death," Bob proclaims. "It only took two injections to help me sleep through the night again. Following Dr. Hyppolite's advice and scheduling epidural injections with Dr. Weiner was a great choice." **FHCN**—Billie S. Noakes



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James P. Weiner, MD, is board certified by the American Board of Anesthesiology. He received his medical degree and completed his residency in physical medicine and rehabilitation at Eastern Virginia Medical School, Norfolk, and completed an anesthesia residency and received fellowship training in pain management at the Naval Hospital, Portsmouth, VA. He also received fellowship training in anesthesia at Bowman-Gray Medical Center, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC. He is a member of the American Association of Electrodiagnostic Medicine, American Association of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, American Society of Anesthesiology, Florida Medical Society, Florida Society of Anesthesiology, International Association for the Study of Pain, and International Spinal Injection Society. He has published extensively in his areas of expertise.



Peter S. Schreiber, DO, is board certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation. He completed his undergraduate studies in microbiology at the University of Florida, Gainesville, and received his medical degree from Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine, Davie, FL. He served his internship and a combined residency in internal medicine and physical medicine and rehabilitation at Case Western Reserve University/MetroHealth Medical Center, Cleveland, OH. Dr. Schreiber is a member of the American Medical Association, American Osteopathic Association, and American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.



Keith S. Susko, MD, is board certified by the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation with subspecialty certification in pain medicine. Dr. Susko completed his undergraduate studies, with an emphasis in biomedical engineering, at the University of Arizona College of Engineering. He earned his medical degree and completed his medical internship and his residency in physical medicine, serving as chief resident, at Eastern Virginia Medical School, Norfolk. While in Virginia, Dr. Susko founded the medical school's Habitat for Humanity student volunteer group, organizing workdays for volunteer labor and assisting in the construction of homes for the needy. He has developed numerous presentations and lectures concerning myofascial trigger point evaluations, osteoporosis, electromyography, cerebral palsy, and low back pain. Dr. Susko is a member of the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Association of Academic Physiatrists, American Academy of Pain Management, American Medical Association, and American Academy of Electrodiagnostic Medicine.



Robert D. Mehrberg, MD, is a board-certified physiatrist, certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation, as well as in electrodiagnostic medicine. He completed his undergraduate studies and earned his medical degree at Tulane University, New Orleans, LA. He served his internship and his residency in physical medicine and rehabilitation at Eastern Virginia Medical School, Norfolk, where he was appointed chief resident. Dr. Mehrberg has lectured on, written, or coauthored numerous articles, abstracts, presentations, and publications concerned with the treatment and well being of rehabilitation patients. Dr. Mehrberg is a member of the American Association of Electrodiagnostic Medicine, American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and Association of Academic Physiatrists.



Pierre R. Hyppolite, MD, is fellowship-trained in spinal cord injury through the University of Miami's Jackson Memorial Hospital/Miami VA Medical Center. He is a graduate of the Faculte De Medicine Et De Pharmacie Universite D'etat d'Haiti, where he earned his medical degree and served his medical internship. Dr. Hyppolite attended Yale University School of Public Health and served an internal medicine internship at the New York Medical College's Our Lady of Mercy Medical Center. He completed his residency in physical medicine and rehabilitation at NYMC's Metropolitan Hospital Center. Dr. Hyppolite is an associate member of the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and the American Paraplegia Society. He is fluent in English, French, and Creole.

### Relief at last

The staff at Southwest Florida Rehab & Pain Management Associates welcomes your questions and comments regarding this article. For additional information or to schedule a consultation, please call or visit one of their conveniently located offices: in Fort Myers at (239) 432-0774, 12700 Creekside Ln., Suite 301; in Cape Coral at (239) 772-5577, 632 Del Prado Blvd., N; and in Bonita Springs at (239) 498-1204, 26800 S. Tamiami Trail, Suite 340.

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