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EPIDURAL STEROID INJECTIONS: STILL SAFE AND EFFECTIVE IN TREATING CHRONIC BACK PAIN

Dr. Alexander P. Hersel, Medical Director of Pain Management and Injury Relief Medical Center, Assures Safety of Obtaining Treatment for Chronic Back Pain in Wake of the Meningitis Outbreak

Santa Monica, Calif. (November 15, 2012) – Pain Management and Injury Relief (PMIR) Medical Center, a Los Angeles-based pain management medical practice, seeks to reassure the public that in wake of the recent, nationally recognized meningitis outbreak, patients suffering from chronic back pain should still seek treatment of the epidural steroid injections. The American Chronic Pain Association (ACPA) states that over 100 million Americans suffer from chronic pain, making it a public health issue not to be taken lightly. Due to decreased wages and lost productivity, chronic pain costs the United States over \$560 billion annually.

The recent meningitis outbreak tied to the New England Compounding Center of Framingham, MA supplying contaminated medications has instilled fear and concerns in patients recommended to have the epidural steroid injection, commonly used to treat

Pain Management and Injury Relief Medical Center chronic back pain. Since this horrible outbreak, there have been various articles that have expressed doubt in the efficacy of these injections in treating pain. It is concerning to our practice that various media outlets are stating that there is no strong evidence that the epidural injection is beneficial in treating sub acute or chronic back pain. This is far from the truth, as confirmed by a recent study published in May 2012 by the Spine Journal – “In more than 80% of patients with cervical radiculopathy who were surgical candidates, surgery was avoided using epidural steroid injection. Epidural steroid injection is therefore considered a safe and effective treatment to choose before undergoing surgery.”

In July 2010, the Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine Journal released a study that stated, “Epidural steroid injection can be recommended as a safe procedure for the analgesic management of patients with lumbar and cervical pain with or without radiculopathy. There is enough evidence that supports its use in various lumbar and neck pathologies.”

Dr. Alexander P. Hersel of Pain Management and Injury Relief Medical Center in Santa Monica, CA states, “The safety of our patients is our number one priority. Our goal is to inform the public that this procedure has been, and remains, safe and effective for treating chronic back pain, and the outbreak is not reflective of a physician's expertise as a pain management specialist.” Dr. Hersel, UCLA-trained physician with a near-decade of experience, has administered thousands of epidural steroid injections safely, and his patients have experienced significant relief from the procedure. “I feel very fortunate that our patients have not been affected by this horrible circumstance, and I feel compelled to raise public awareness that the efficacy and safety of the epidural steroid procedure remains. It is unfortunate that I must reassure my patients who are suffering from chronic

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pain not to fear a minimally-invasive option that is highly beneficial.” PMIR Medical
Center uses steroid medication from PSS World Medical, Inc., whose medical supplies
“are not compounded products, only pharmaceuticals from FDA approved
manufacturers,” states Mike Abney, Vice President Supplier Management of PSS World
Medical, Inc.

Todd Riddell, a retired US Veteran, suffering from severe low back pain since April 2006, saw Dr. Hersel for an epidural steroid injection. When he arrived for the procedure, also had a locked neck. “I hadn’t slept in a bed for two nights and there was no position I could find that was not painful,” states Mr. Riddell. Following a consult with our trained physicians, they decided with Mr. Riddell, that the best treatment option would be a cervical epidural steroid injection and lumbar epidural steroid injection, and he is now pain free. “I’ve received the epidural injection and am extremely pleased with the results. I am so happy to have found Dr. Hersel and his staff at the PMIR Medical Center.”

PMIR Medical Center feels it is important to recognize that the efficacy of this minimally invasive procedure remains and continues to be extremely beneficial for patients who are considering opioid medication management as the latter option. Opioid medication is not a long-term solution for chronic pain management and can come with serious side effects. Tolerance is a common complication of opioid use, in that continued increasing dosages are necessary to obtain the desired results for pain relief. In addition, hormonal changes, depression, and opioid-induced sedation are also associated with opioid use. Epidural steroid injections are a long-term solution for pain management, and highly-trained pain

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Pain Management and Injury Relief Medical Center
management physicians are dedicated to reducing pain while improving the patient's
quality of life.

30

Founded in 2003, PMIR Medical Center is committed to helping patients achieve lasting freedom from pain. Our top-educated pain management specialists use state-of-the-art equipment and innovative procedures to target and treat the source of your pain. Our comprehensive, integrative approach to pain management—which combines the best conventional treatments with complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) options—offers a high rate of success in restoring your health and improving your quality of life. PMIR Medical Center currently has offices in Santa Monica, Thousand Oaks and Simi Valley. www.paininjuryrelief.com

If you would like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with Dr. Alexander P. Hersel, please call Linnea McLaughlin at 310-449-1000 or email Linnea at linneam@paininjuryrelief.com

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