

Author

Kalyan Yamijala, COO and Co-founder – PainMed-PA

Kalyan Yamijala has spent over 25 years at the intersection of healthcare and technology. As a founder of a healthcare technology and revenue cycle management company, he is passionate about building solutions that simplify prior authorization, streamline revenue cycle workflows, and support better patient care.

Epidural Steroid Injection (ESI) Prior Authorization Submission Checklist

Use this checklist to ensure **clean, complete ESI prior authorization submissions** and reduce preventable first-pass denials.

Before You Submit: Payer & Scheduling Review

- Confirm payer-specific ESI coverage requirements
- Verify authorization turnaround time (**typically 4–6 days**)
- Schedule the procedure **7–10 days after submission**
- Confirm payer imaging recency rules (often **within 24 months**)

Required Diagnosis & Clinical Criteria

- Diagnosis of **radiculopathy** clearly documented
- Radicular symptoms described in the clinical notes
- Diagnosis aligns with clinical exam and imaging findings

Imaging Requirements

- MRI or CT imaging attached
- Imaging shows **disc herniation or spinal stenosis**
- Imaging correlates to radicular symptoms
- Imaging meets payer recency requirements

Clinical Examination Documentation

- Physical exam supports radiculopathy diagnosis
- Findings are clearly documented and consistent across records

Conservative Therapy Documentation

- Failed conservative therapy documented
- Type, duration, and outcome of therapy noted
- Conservative care failure supports medical necessity for ESI

Procedure-Specific Details (Must Match Imaging)

- **Laterality** (left / right / bilateral)
- **Spinal level(s)** specified
- **Severity** documented
- Procedural details match imaging and clinical documentation

Repeat Injection Planning

- Confirm payer limit (**typically 3 ESIs in a rolling 12-month period**)
- Document **≥50% pain relief** when applicable
- Ensure **minimum 3-month gap** between injections
- Track prior ESIs to stay within coverage limits

Final Pre-Submission Check

- All required documents attached
- Clinical, imaging, and procedural details aligned
- Authorization request reviewed before submission