

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