

Joint Injection

General Information

Your health care provider has determined that a joint injection would be helpful in treating your chronic pain condition. A joint is the location where bones connect, often allowing movement. Over time, the joint can develop arthritis and cause pain. Placing medication directly into the joint can help treat your pain, depending on the area of the body injected. These injections are commonly performed to treat a variety of pain syndromes, including:

- Shoulder Pain
- Hip Pain
- Knee Pain

Procedure Information: What to Expect

Prior to the injection appointment, there may be some medications that need to be stopped, and your health care provider will discuss these with you. They could include blood-thinning (anticoagulant), antiplatelet medications and/or anti-inflammatory medications such as aspirin, Xarelto, Coumadin, Plavix etc.

The procedure is performed in a variety of ways. It may be performed most simply by having the provider feel around the joint and to identify the joint space by touch. Joint injections may also be performed using image guidance, such as an ultrasound or fluoroscope (x-ray). The injection will be performed in the office.

You are brought to the pre-operative area where you will be placed in a gown. You will be escorted to the procedure room. You will be placed on a special table to perform the procedure. An X-ray/fluoroscope is used to see the bones to guide needle placement. After a cold, cleaning solution is placed on your skin, it is important not to touch the area once it is cleaned. You will then feel a pinch and a burn (much like a bee sting), which is the local anesthetic (numbing medicine). After that, you will feel a pressure and a poke. Once the joint space is entered, contrast dye is commonly used to ensure proper needle placement. Then, the medication is injected, which can include steroid, normal saline, and/or local anesthetic. Band-Aid/paper tape is applied to the injection sites.

You are then escorted to the post-operative area where you will be monitored for up to 30 minutes after the injection. When you are ready to leave, the staff will give you discharge instructions and help you make a follow up appointment if one hasn't been made already.

Post-Procedure Instructions

What should I do after the injection?

- Recommend taking it easy for the rest of the day
- You **MAY** do normal routine activities such as return to work, do household tasks etc.
- **DO NOT** participate in strenuous activities
- Resume all medications as instructed by your provider
- You should not be in sitting water (baths, hot tubs, swimming pools, lakes/ponds) for three (3) days after the procedure. **Showers are OK**
- May participate in formal physical therapy sessions 72 hours after your procedure. You may continue performing your home exercise program in the interim
- Keep post-operative appointment to report relief

When will I notice relief?

- Immediate pain relief from the local anesthetic used in the injectate for a period of time
- Corticosteroids usually take two (2) or three (3) days to start working but can take up to seven (7) to ten (10) days

How long can I expect relief?

- The extent and duration of pain relief may depend on the amount of inflammation in the joint
- In some cases, a single injection brings long-term pain relief
- **Intended goal is >50% relief for several weeks to 3-4 months**
 - **If so, you may be a candidate for a repeat injection AFTER 3-4 months (max 3-4 joint injections/12 months)**
 - You will need to have an office visit prior to ordering a repeat injection to document relief from previous injection(s), updated location of pain and recent physical exam

What other things can I expect?

- Some soreness around the injection site for which ice may be applied
- Elevation in blood glucose for 2-3 days (especially if you are diabetic)

Please contact our office (815) 398-9491 if you experience:

- Significant weakness in the arms or legs for more than 24 hours
- Redness or swelling around injection site for more than 24 hours
- Bladder or bowel accidents and/or numbness around the groin
- Fever or chills