



PATIENT INJECTION INFORMATION LEAFLET

What is corticosteroid?

A medication which may relieve swelling, stiffness and pain by reducing inflammation.

Is this the same drug that athletes and body-builders take?

No. The steroids we inject are completely different and extremely safe.

Why do I need a steroid injection?

Because it may:

- reduce your pain
- reduce the number of treatment sessions needed
- enable you to start rehabilitation earlier
- help you return to normal activities sooner

Why **can't** I just take anti-inflammatory pills?

You can, but it is an option you should discuss with your GP or physiotherapist.

Possible side effects include stomach upsets and bleeding. Steroid injections do not affect the stomach.

When should I not have an injection?

When you:

- are allergic to local anaesthetic or steroid
- have any infection on your skin or elsewhere in your body
- feel unwell
- are due to have surgery on the area
- are pregnant
- are under the age of 18
- do not want an injection

What are the possible side effects?

Although side effects are very rare we need to advise you of the following:

- Sometimes the injection area may be sore for a few hours
- Flushing of the face for a few hours after administration
- Diabetic patients may notice a temporary increase in blood sugar levels
- If you are taking blood thinning drugs there may be some temporary bruising
- A small area of fat loss or change in colour of the skin around the injection site
- Very rarely, there will be slight vaginal bleeding
- Very small chance of Infection. If the area becomes hot, swollen and painful after 24 hours you should contact your physiotherapist or doctor immediately

How is the injection carried out?

The skin is cleaned with antiseptic. A sterile needle is gently put into the affected area and the solution is injected through the needle. After a short time, you will be re-examined.

Is the injection painful?

No more painful than having a blood test. Small joints tend to be more painful than larger ones. You can be confident that your physiotherapist has been given intensive training in this technique and any soreness afterwards is easily resolved by pain relieving tablets.

How fast does the injection work?

If local anaesthetic is also used, the pain should ease within a few minutes, though it may return after about one hour, just as it would after a visit to the dentist. The steroid usually continues working for at least three to six weeks.

How many injections can I have?

This depends on the part of the body involved and will be decided by your therapist and yourself. Usually one injection is sufficient, but if the pain is severe, or has been present for a long time, you may need more than one.

What should I do after the injection?

If the problem was caused by overuse, you will probably be told to rest the area for about a week or two. For most other conditions, you may start early gentle movement.

When will I have to be seen again?

We suggest you book in or email us one to two months after the injection to monitor the long term effect of the treatment and you will be given appropriate physiotherapy treatment and possibly some exercises to do at home. You may be seen earlier if your physiotherapist thinks it necessary.

If you have any further questions, please ask your physiotherapist.