

Information about your Corticosteroid Injection

In the case of an emergency such as suspected infection or allergic reaction please go to Accident and Emergency to get immediate medical attention

What is in the injection?

The injection contains Corticosteroid which is a strong anti-inflammatory medication. Sometimes we may use a local anaesthetic to help diagnose the problem and in some cases to ease the pain.

How can an injection help me?

As the medication is placed directly into your affected tissue, the effect on your symptoms is stronger and faster than with tablets.

The injection can reduce pain and swelling, allowing you to start rehabilitation sooner. You should feel some improvement within 3 or 4 days, but this can take up to 2 - 3 weeks.

What happens before the injection?

- We will explain the procedure to you and you will have the chance to ask questions.
- You can delay your decision or decide not to have the injection.
- We will complete screening forms with you to identify any risks and potential side effects or complications.
- We will ask you to sign a form to say you agree to have the injection.

Do I continue with my painkillers?

It is safe to take painkillers at the same time as receiving an injection and they will help with the discomfort some people feel after the injection. Please keep taking your painkillers, if you need to.

What happens after the injection?

- We may ask you to wait with us for a period of time after your injection to make sure you feel well before leaving the department.
- The anti-inflammatory effect starts 24-36 hours after the injection.
- Do not overdo it but please move and use the area normally.
- Avoid the things which used to give you pain for about a week after the injection.

You shouldn't have a steroid injection if:

- You are allergic to corticosteroids.
- You don't feel well.
- You have had a viral or bacterial infection within the last 2 weeks.
- You have an infection anywhere in your body.
- You are under 18 years old.
- You have a bleeding disorder.
- You have received your Covid-19 or other vaccine within the last 2 weeks.
- You are due to receive your Covid-19 or other vaccine in the 2 weeks following your injection.

It is very important that you tell us if you have any of the following:

- If you are waiting for **any surgery**
- Diabetes
- Lung or heart condition
- Epilepsy
- Malignant (cancerous) tumour
- Are taking medication to thin your blood
- Renal or Liver Disorder
- Recent trauma and possible fracture
- If you think you are pregnant
- If you are breast feeding
- Recent vaccinations or injections e.g. flu, travel, Covid-19

Serious complications are rare but can include:

- **Infection**

As with any invasive procedure there is a small risk of infection. Symptoms can include redness, heat, swelling, increasingly severe pain in the area where you had the injection, 'flu-like symptoms, and feeling generally unwell. If you suspect there may be an infection please go to Accident and Emergency for medical attention.

- **Allergic reaction or Anaphylaxis**

Although rare, some people can have an allergic reaction. If you develop a rash, swelling around your mouth or throat, or breathing difficulties please call 999 and go to Accident and Emergency for immediate medical attention.

Are there any side effects from this treatment?

Side effects are very rare but the following reactions are possible. Most are mild and will settle quickly. Please let us know if you noticed any of these reactions after having your injection.

- 1 in 5 (20%) of steroid injections result in a flare of pain. This should settle but can take up to a week to do so. You can use painkillers or ice packs to help.
- You may notice some warmth and swelling in the area around the injection site. This should settle within 2- 3 days with an ice pack and painkillers.
- Minor bleeding may occur at the site of injection.
- Some bruising may occur at the site of injection and can last for several weeks.
- **Depigmentation.** Occasionally your skin may become slightly thinner and lighter around the site of the injection. This is usually an area around the size of a 10 pence piece. The effect may be permanent and is more common in people with a darker skin.
- **Fat Atrophy.** Occasionally there may be some loss of subcutaneous fat at the site of the injection. The effect can be permanent.
- **Muscle Atrophy.** Occasionally there may be loss of muscle tissue at the site of injection. This is more common with frequent injections. The effect can be permanent.
- **Tissue Weakening.** Soft tissues around the injection site may be weaker for about 4 - 6 weeks following the injection. There is a greater risk of injury or rupture of the tendon during this time. This is more common with frequent injections. Please avoid heavy or repeated strain of the area that has been injected for 4 - 6 weeks
- Your face may appear slightly flushed for a few days.
- Your period may become irregular but should settle quickly. Post menopausal woman can occasionally experience bleeding which should settle quickly. Please contact your GP if you have any concerns.
- If you are diabetic your sugar levels may go up for a short while. Please monitor your sugar levels carefully for up to 2 weeks after your injection. If you have any concerns, please contact your diabetes nurse or doctor.
- You may experience a change in mood. This may be more common in people with a previous history of mood disturbance. If you are worried, please contact your doctor.

**** The risks of corticosteroid injection therapy associated with Covid-19 (Coronavirus) are not fully understood. The risk of serious Coronavirus symptoms may be increased if you contract the virus within 14 days of receiving the injection.**

You should pay particular attention to all of the normal measures advised to avoid catching Coronavirus in the few days before the injection and after it.**

