



Local Steroid Injection

Steroid injections have been used for decades to treat various ailments. Corticosteroids are naturally occurring chemicals produced in your body by the adrenal glands.

Corticosteroids are extremely effective at controlling inflammation in joints and soft tissues, with the desired effect of easing pain and stiffness. Used as injections, they are usually an adjunct to other rehabilitation strategies for longer term management of your condition.

Steroids used for injection are synthetically produced and are often used alongside a local anaesthetic. Injecting these substances allows a small amount to have a greater concentration where it is needed.

There are occasions when injection with steroid and/or local anaesthetic are contraindicated, or precaution is needed. Your clinician will check these with you.

There are some possible risks and side-effects associated with local anaesthetic and steroid injection. The more serious of these are extremely rare.

These include:

- infection
- allergic reaction
- tendon rupture
- a flare of pain
- local skin thinning and whitening
- reddening of the face (facial flushing)
- altered mood
- menstrual irregularity
- vivid dreams
- changes in eyesight
- raised blood sugar if diabetic
- raised blood pressure
- blood vessel injury leading to associated bleeding and bruising
- nerve injury leading to numbness or weakness
- lack of response
- worsening of your condition

Follow injection it is important to avoid exposure to measles, shingles and chickenpox if you have never had them, and to seek medical advice without delay if this occurs.

Some people are very anxious and can feel faint around the time of injection. The injection is typically not as painful as you likely expect. It is often no more uncomfortable than a blood test. It is advised that you wait in the department following your injection until you feel fit to leave.

Driving after your injection may not be safe if the anaesthetic used limits your function. This should be a relatively short-lived effect. The decision as when to resume driving is at your discretion. You may wish to arrange alternative transport.

A period of relative rest is usually advised following this type of injection but varies depending on the condition being treated. Your clinician will advise what is appropriate.

If you have any concerning side effects or complications, please contact your clinician (as below) and/or your GP. If you have any serious complications, such as suspected infection, please attend A+E.

If you have any questions or concerns or wish to discuss any of the above information in more detail, please speak with your clinician.

- Physiotherapy Good Hope Hospital 0121 424 7040
- Physiotherapy Heartlands Hospital 0121 424 0493
- Physiotherapy Solihull Hospital 0121 424 5446
- Physiotherapy Solihull Community 0121 329 0107
- Via your GP
- Trauma and Orthopaedics secretaries via Switchboard 0121 424 2000

Local Steroid Injection Clinician Checklist

Contraindications

- Under 18
- Pregnant or breastfeeding
- Planned or recent surgery
- Known allergy to steroid, local anaesthetic, benzyl alcohol or chlorhexidine gluconate
- Patient unwell, current infection or taking antibiotics
- Consultant led patient without agreement to injection

Precautions

- Diabetes
- Immunosuppression therapies
- Anti-coagulant therapy
- Warfarinised with INR >3.0
- Taking bupropion (Zyban)
- Epileptic
- Finished antibiotic course within last 2 weeks
- History of significant depression
- Known ventricular arrhythmia, SA block, AV block
- Complete heart block (LA contraindicated)
- Elastoplast allergy
- Recent vaccination (within 2 weeks)
- Use of NSAIDs without PPI
- Hypertension

Local Steroid Injection Procedure Checklist

- Local Steroid Information sheet provided and details discussed
- Contraindications/Precautions checked and discussed
- Consent gained
- Drugs expiry date checked
- Aseptic preparation employed
- Appropriate patient positioning
- PPE
- Skin disinfected
- Aseptic delivery of injection
- Safe disposal of equipment
- Post-injection advice to patient

Accessibility

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