

If you have a high temperature and your joint becomes:

- o Hot
 - o Red
 - o Swollen
- Painful

Then you should contact us the surgery or 111 when the surgery is closed.

Are there other side effects I need to know about?

- Some patients experience facial flushing after an injection or itching at the injection site. These symptoms should settle within the first few days.
 - Skin changes – very occasionally you may see some thinning or discoloration of the skin may occur at the site of the injection. This is called de-pigmentation and may take longer to fade; sometimes it has a permanent effect.
 - Skin dimpling may occur.
- Menstrual disturbance – women may have some changes in their normal cycle after an injection. This is more likely if you have more than one joint injected. If it lasts longer than one cycle you should see your doctor.

If you have any reactions that you are concerned about you should contact your GP or contact NHS 111 for advice.

We can usually inject a joint up to 4 times in a year. Your doctor would be able to give you more advice about this.

Where can I obtain further information?

If you would like any further information about steroid injections you can visit www.arc.org for a leaflet on joint injections or contact NHS 111 for advice and guidance.

LET US KNOW

If you have any questions regarding the service, please contact us at the surgery. We welcome any suggestions about the quality of service you received; this will help us improve our service in the future.



Patient Information Leaflet

Joint Injections



Park Lane Surgery

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What is a joint injection?

Steroid injections are commonly used for the treatment of joint and soft tissue disorders. Steroids have been shown to be helpful for easing pain and inflammation so you can use your joint again. Joint injections are done for people with rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis and many other conditions. Sometimes we inject into the tissues around joints as well because this can help with conditions such as bursitis.

What has been injected into my joints?

We usually inject a small amount of steroid.

Your clinician will also decide whether to inject a local anaesthetic at the same time. This does not reduce inflammation but will allow almost immediate temporary pain relief.

How long will it be before my joints feel better?

The local anaesthetic will start to reduce your pain within a few minutes of the injection. This pain relief will last for 1-2 hours.

The steroid will take longer to start working; sometimes it can be nearly 1-2 days

So while you are waiting for the steroid to work you can take painkillers such as paracetamol and apply ice packs. The joint you have had injected will hopefully feel better for up to 3 months and sometimes longer, but everybody is different so it may not last this long. Some people feel no improvement at all.

Can I leave the clinic straight after the injection?

Generally you will be able to leave after your injection, as long as you have felt well.

Very rarely people can have an allergic reaction to the drugs. If you had an allergic reaction you get a rash on your skin, feel your face swelling up or feel you can't breathe properly. If this happens we will be able to treat you immediately. If you feel any of these symptoms later on at home you should go to your nearest Accident and Emergency department.

Do I need to rest after the injection?

It is recommended to rest the joint that has been injected for 48 hours; this helps the injection work better. If this is impractical then it is advisable to avoid any strenuous exercise for the following 48 hours.

A general principle is to move the joint injected as normal but do not lift or push heavy objects for a week after the injection.

I am diabetic - does the injection affect my diabetes?

The steroid can make your blood sugar higher than normal. You need to check your blood more often for a week. You may need to increase your insulin. Contact the surgery for advice if your blood sugar is high.

What are the risks or side-effects?

Side effects are rare. Occasionally people notice a flare in their joint pain within the first 24 hours. This usually settles within a couple of days.

The most important but very rare side effect of treatment is infection in your joint – this is very rare (for every 20,000 injections we give no more than one of them would get an infection).

Importantly you should remember that if you have an infected joint it will not get better with the rest and ice packs we suggested. So if your joint feels like it is getting more and more painful and swollen please contact us.