

## Physiotherapy

# Corticosteroid Injections

### Why do I need a corticosteroid injection?

Corticosteroid injections are commonly used for the treatment of joint and soft tissue disorders. It is a medicine which can help to relieve swelling, stiffness and pain by reducing inflammation. Local anaesthetic may also be used as part of the injection

### Can I continue with my normal medication before/after the injection?

It is usually okay to continue with your medication but if you are in doubt please speak to your physiotherapist.

### Are there any times we would not do an injection?

**Yes**, if you:

- Have an infection anywhere in your body or are currently taking antibiotics
- Are allergic to local anaesthetic or steroid
- Have poorly controlled diabetes
- Feel unwell
- Are due to have surgery at the area soon
- Have an unstable INR
- Have surgical metalwork at the site of the proposed injection

### Is the injection painful?

It is reasonable to expect some discomfort during this procedure.

### How fast does the injection work?

If local anaesthetic is also used the pain should be less within a few minutes, though it may return after about an hour, just as when you visit the dentist. The steroid usually starts to work within 24 – 48 hours but may take longer.

## How long does the effect last?

This varies from person to person and the condition being treated.

## How many injections can I have?

In most circumstances the physiotherapist will only inject the joint once to aid your rehabilitation, this clinic does not offer long term injection therapy.

## What happens during the injection?

The risks and benefits will be explained to you in detail. You will be placed in a comfortable position. The skin around the site will be cleaned and a solution injected through a needle.

## What are the possible side effects?

These are very rare however the following may occur

- **Infection.** If you experience worsening joint swelling, redness or pain and have a raised temperature you may have an infection in the joint. You need to seek medical attention and we suggest you see your GP or dial NHS 111 for advice; they may recommend that you attend the Accident and Emergency department. Following the injection you may be at higher risk of developing an infection elsewhere in the body.
- **Allergic reaction.** Any medication has the potential to cause an allergic reaction. This is most likely to occur within half an hour following the injection and you should therefore remain in the department for this time. Symptoms of a severe allergy include wheeze or difficulty breathing, swelling of the face, throat or tongue, vomiting or feeling very unwell. If you experience these symptoms call for immediate help.
- **Increase in pain at the site of the injection.** This may last for a few days. It does not mean anything has gone wrong, simple pain relief may be used to relieve the symptoms. If it persists for longer than this please call the department/GP/111 for advice.
- **Blurring or visual disturbance** (central serous chorioretinopathy) due to steroid, This often settles but if it does occur then please seek advice from the physiotherapy department. You may need an ophthalmology review.

## COVID-19

- Depomedrone can suppress your immune system for up to 48 hours post injection although there is no direct evidence showing that a corticosteroid injection can increase the chances of contracting COVID-19.
- The effects of corticosteroid injection on becoming seriously ill with COVID-19 is as yet unknown. The incubation period for the COVID-19 virus can be up to 14 days so giving a corticosteroid injection to someone showing no symptoms could increase the risk of adverse outcomes from catching the COVID-19 virus.
- There has been no evidence to suggest that a steroid injection reduces the effectiveness of the COVID 19 vaccine, but the hospital guidance is not to administer a corticosteroid injection within 2 weeks of undergoing a COVID-19 vaccine.

## Less serious side effects

- Small area of fat loss or a change in colour of the skin around the injection site
- Immunosuppression (increased risk of serious illness from chicken pox exposure, if you haven't had it previously)
- Menstrual irregularity
- Diabetic patients may notice a temporary increase in blood sugar levels
- There is a small risk of tendon rupture with injections into soft tissue structures.
- Temporary bruising which may be worse if you are taking blood thinning drugs
- Flushing of the face for a few hours
- Dizziness or fainting
- Abscess at the site of the injection, although very rare
- Drowsiness or confusion, do not drive or operate machinery until this subsides

Other rare side effects are listed on the drug information leaflet available online;



Depo-Medrone

[www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/8957/smpc](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/8957/smpc)



Lidocaine 1%

[www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/4781/smpc](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/4781/smpc)

**Should you experience any adverse effects please seek advice from your GP, pharmacist or NHS Direct. Please also inform the MSK Service of any adverse reaction.**

## Helpful Contacts

- NHS Direct telephone 111 for non- emergency or [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
- MSK and Physiotherapy Department 01484 905380

## What happens following the injection?

You will be given advice on when to start exercising, this varies depending upon the site of the injection.

You have an open appointment for 6 months from the date of injection with your MSK clinician. Please contact on the above MSK number if you are having ongoing symptoms and would like a review.

**If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :**

MSK and Physiotherapy Department  
Telephone No: 01484 905380

[www.cht.nhs.uk](http://www.cht.nhs.uk)

**If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.**

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

ਚ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਚੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ کو ہی معلومات کسری اور فارمیٹ طریبان می درکار ہوں، تو برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے می ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

"إذا احتجت الحصول على هذه المعلومة بشكل مغاير أو مترجمة إلى لغة مختلفة فيرجى منك الاتصال بالقسم المذكور أعلاه"