

What is a corticosteroid?

A medication that can relieve swelling, stiffness and pain by reducing inflammation

Is this the same drug that athletes and bodybuilders take?

No. The steroids we inject are extremely safe and are different to anabolic steroids.

Why do I need a steroid injection?

Because it will help to reduce your pain and inflammation. You can then start rehabilitation sooner, have fewer treatment sessions and return to normal activities more quickly.

Why don't I just take anti-inflammatory medicines by mouth?

You can, but the side effects of these are much more common and can cause stomach upsets and bleeding. These injections go directly to where they are needed and therefore by-pass the stomach.

Are there any times I should not have an injection?

Yes, for example if you:

- Have any infection on your skin or elsewhere in your body.
- Feel unwell
- Warfarin or certain other anticoagulation medication
- Are due to have surgery in the area soon
- Are pregnant/breast feeding
- Are under 18
- Artificial Joint
- Do not want an injection
- If you have an allergy to steroid or local anaesthetic

How is the injection done?

The skin is cleaned with antiseptic. A needle is gently put into the affected part and the solution is injected through the needle. You will be asked to wait for a short while after your injection.

Is the injection painful?

Not particularly. Your physiotherapist has had extensive training in the technique, part of which is to make it as comfortable as possible. Sometimes it can be

sore for a few hours, but you will be told what to do about this.

What are the possible side effects?

These are very rare and your physiotherapist will discuss them with you:

- Infection: If the area becomes hot, swollen, painful for more than 24 hours and you feel generally unwell, you should contact your physiotherapist or doctor immediately
- Allergic/Anaphylactic reaction
- Flushing of the face for a few hours
- Small area of fat loss or a change of colour of the skin around the injection site
- Slight vaginal bleeding
- Diabetic patients may notice a temporary increase in blood sugar levels
- If you are taking blood thinning drugs there may be some temporary bruising
- You may be asked to wait for a short period of time after the injection to ensure there is no allergic reaction to the drug

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 2448 hours, but may take longer.

How long does the effect last?

This varies from person to person and the condition being treated, but the steroid usually continues working for 3 to 6 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 there for a long time, you may need more.

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; if it is a joint pain, you can start early gentle movement.

When will I have to be seen again?

Usually your therapist will want to see you again about a week or ten days after the injection. You will then be given appropriate physiotherapy treatment and probably some exercises for you to do at home.

This is what has been injected:

Steroid name and dose:

Injection Site:

Local Anaesthetic: _____

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.

PATIENT INFORMATION

Injection Therapy

Physiotherapy Department

Tel: