

Joint and Soft Tissue Injections

What is a joint and soft tissue injection?

A joint injection is a shot with a needle into a joint (where two or more bones meet to allow movement, such as the knee). A soft tissue injection is a shot into a soft tissue space (such as the space between a muscle and a bone). Doctors can use the needle to remove fluid or put in medicine.

Pain relievers, such as lidocaine, and anti-inflammatory medicines, such as corticosteroids, are most often used in injections. Your doctor can use these injections to diagnose or treat many conditions, including arthritis, gout, rheumatism, tendonitis, joint swelling, bursitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, and plantar fasciitis.

What will I feel during the injection?

Your doctor may give you a numbing medicine or use a cold spray on your skin before the shot so you feel less pain. The pain caused by your condition will usually go away a short time after you get the injection.

Are there any complications?

These shots are usually very safe; however, there is always the chance of tendon rupture, infection, loss of skin color, and thinning of the skin at the location of the shot. You should remind your doctor of any medicine allergies you have.

What should I do after the procedure?

Your doctor will put a bandage on the shot location and tell you when to take it off. You should keep the area clean. Your doctor may ask you to put ice on the area. Your doctor will give you instructions about activity and rest. Call your doctor right away if you notice redness or swelling.

What should I expect after the procedure?

In most cases, you can expect pain relief and improved symptoms. If your doctor injects a corticosteroid, you may have some pain at the shot location for a day or two. This is a normal reaction to the medicine. You can relieve this pain by holding ice

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on the area for 15 to 20 minutes at a time, several times a day. You can also take oral pain relief medicine if your doctor says it is okay.

Where can I get more information?

Your doctor

Joint injections:

American College of Rheumatology
<https://www.rheumatology.org/I-Am-A/Patient-Caregiver/Treatments/Joint-Injection-Aspiration>

Treatments for arthritis (including injections):

MedlinePlus
<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000374.htm>

Steroid injections:

MedlinePlus
<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007678.htm>

Mayo Clinic
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/cortisone-shots/about/pac-20384794?p=1>

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Notes from your family doctor