

HOW LONG CAN I EXPECT THE PAIN RELIEF TO LAST?

The duration of pain relief is variable and difficult to predict. The injection may last from a few weeks to several months. The aim is to break the pain cycle to enable you to engage in a rehabilitative process, which is the mainstay of treatment for chronic pain.

IS THERE ANY THING I NEED TO INFORM THE DOCTOR BEFORE THE PROCEDURE?

- ◆ You should always tell the doctor if you are pregnant or likely to be pregnant.
- ◆ You should inform the doctor about any blood thinning medications that you might be taking. This includes Aspirin, Clopidogrel, Warfarin, Heparin and some of the newer ones like Rivaroxaban.
- ◆ Finally, always inform the doctor about your allergies, especially latex, iodine and medications.



OTHER TREATMENTS OFFERED

Lumbar epidural Injection	Lumbar radiofrequency Denervation
Lumbar Facet Injections	Botox for Migraine
Cervical Facet Injections	Trigger Point Injection
Lumbar Diagnostic Blocks	Sacro-Iliac Joint Injection
Cervical Diagnostic Blocks	Coccygeal Injection
Transforaminal epidural Injections	Occipital Nerve Blocks
Plantar Fascia Injections	Trochanteric Bursa Injections

OTHER CONDITIONS TREATED

Fibromyalgia	Trigeminal Neuralgia
Mechanical Low Back Pain	Neuropathic Pain
Headache	Diabetic Neuropathy
Migraine	Complex Regional Pain
Sciatica	Whiplash Pain
Sacro-iliac Pain	Medical-Legal Reporting (Personal Injury)
Trochanteric Bursitis	

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Facet Joint Injections

The aim of this information sheet is to provide you with information relating to facet joint injections and to answer some questions that you may have.



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WHAT IS A FACET JOINT INJECTION?

Facet joint injection is an injection of local anaesthetic (numbing) and steroid (anti-inflammatory) into or around the capsule of the lumbar or cervical facet joint. The local anaesthetic helps the pain and the steroid works as an anti-inflammatory medicine.

WHAT ARE FACET JOINTS?

Facet joints are small joints that link the bones of the spine together. The facet joints allow movement and stabilise the spine. Wear and tear, inflammation and injury to the facet joints may cause pain in some people.

WHAT CAUSES PAIN IN THE FACET JOINTS?

Facet joints are constantly in motion and can develop wear and tear changes. These changes may cause pain though there is no firm evidence to support this theory at present.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE PROCEDURE?

The procedure is performed under fluoroscopy (x-ray) guidance. Local anaesthetic will be used to numb the skin. The doctor will then insert a needle close to the facet joint. The doctor would finally inject the medication in to the facet joint. The procedure is performed under local anaesthetic, and you will remain awake during the procedure

ARE THERE ANY RISKS OR SIDE-EFFECTS?

As with any procedure, side-effects may occur. These are usually minor but there are risks with this procedure.

Side-effects may include;

- ◆ Mild local tenderness and/or bruising at the site of the injection, that usually settles over the first few days
- ◆ The local anaesthetic may rarely spread causing some numbness and/or weakness in your legs and other areas. Should this occur, the effect is temporary and will rapidly resolve over minutes or rarely hours
- ◆ Infection. This is rare. You should seek medical help if there is local warmth or redness over the site of injection with tenderness and/or you feel hot and unwell. This may require antibiotic treatment
- ◆ There are important nerves in the spine, but serious nerve injury is extremely rare (less than 1 in 10,000 cases)
- ◆ Injection treatments are not always effective and may not help your pain
- ◆ (Injections in thoracic area only) Injury or collapse of the lung (pneumothorax). This is very rare. If you get chest pain or breathlessness, you should seek immediate medical help

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FOLLOWING THE PROCEDURE

- ◆ You will be monitored for 30 minutes after the procedure. Occasionally you may feel your legs to be slightly heavy after the procedure.
- ◆ You will be instructed not to drive for up to 24 hours after the injection or longer if you feel unsafe. You will need some-one responsible to take you home.
- ◆ You can generally return to work the next day but you should avoid heavy work and strenuous activity for up to 48 hours.
- ◆ The procedure may not help in some cases. Your pain may be exacerbated for up to a week or sometimes longer from the steroid injection.
- ◆ We always warn you about serious side effects including infection, nerve damage and bleeding but these are extremely rare. The doctor will discuss these side effects in more detail when you sign the consent form.

