

Steroid injection into your hip joint



What is a steroid injection?

This is a procedure to inject an anti-inflammatory drug into a joint and works by reducing tissue inflammation. The steroid can be mixed with a local anaesthetic and the two are injected together. Local anaesthetic does not reduce inflammation but allows temporary pain relief in the joint.

What are the benefits?

The steroid should reduce inflammation and pain in your hip joint and surrounding area, making it easier for you to move and use the joint normally.

Are there any risks or complications?

There is a very small risk of infection that may need antibiotic treatment. If you experience redness or swelling around the area injected or a high temperature, seek advice from your GP or attend the emergency department and explain that you have recently had an injection.

There is a very small risk of bruising or bleeding into the joint, which will settle in a few days.

Are there any alternatives?

Alternatives to steroid injections may include physiotherapy or drug therapy with anti-inflammatory tablets. These treatments will usually have been tried before a steroid injection is considered.

Surgery is also a possibility in many conditions but is often reserved for when conservative measures have failed. You may wish to discuss this option with your doctor.

How do I prepare for it?

No specific preparation is required, but you should advise the person performing the procedure if you are taking any anticoagulants (blood thinning drugs), such as:

- Warfarin
- Aspirin
- Clopidogrel.

Who will I see?

You will see a radiologist, a radiographer and an assistant. The radiologist or radiographer performing the procedure will watch a monitor whilst injecting the steroid.

What will happen?

When you arrive in the department you will be asked to change into a gown. For your own comfort you may wish to bring your own dressing gown and slippers.

You will be taken into the X-ray room and the procedure will be explained to you. You will be asked to lie on the X-ray table and X-rays are used to locate the correct site for injection, which will be marked.

The skin over your joint is cleaned with antiseptic fluid and covered with a sterile towel. A very fine needle is inserted into the joint and X-ray dye is injected to ensure it is in the right place. A steroid and local anaesthetic is then injected into the joint.

Will it be uncomfortable?

You will feel the sharpness of the needle. You may also feel a tingling, pressure or fullness as the X-ray dye and steroid are injected but this should settle quickly.

How long will it take?

The procedure will take about 20 minutes.

What will happen afterwards?

You will be assisted from the X-ray table and advised to wait in the department for about 15 minutes.

Are there any side effects?

The steroid injection is designed to stay inside the joint and should have little effect on the rest of the body. However there are some possible side effects:

- Temporary increase in joint pain for 24-48 hours afterwards.
- Patients with diabetes should monitor their blood sugar for 5 days following the injection as it may cause a temporary rise in blood sugar levels.
- Women may notice menstrual irregularities for a few months afterwards.
- You may experience facial flushing for up to 48 hours afterwards. This is usually mild, can begin within a few hours of the injection and may last for a few days.

Can I drive home afterwards?

No. You **must not** drive following the procedure. Please arrange to be driven home. We also advise you not to drive for 12 hours after the injection.

What happens when I go home?

We recommend that you go home and rest for the remainder of the day. You may take any regular medication you have and you can take painkillers if necessary.

Any questions?

If you have any questions or need further information please contact the Clinical Imaging appointments team on 01872 252290.

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690

