

Post MSK injection therapy

Procedure Information

Introduction

- You have been referred for a Cortisone Injection.
- This involves putting a needle into a joint or soft tissue to inject an anti-inflammatory cortisone medication.
- A cortisone injection helps reduce swelling, pain, and irritation.
- You might also have a local anaesthetic injection. This numbs a small area of your body, so you do not feel pain.

What is my diagnosis:

Medicines injected today:

Date:

Injection administered by: _____

Follow-up appointment: _____

(Book at reception)

Next steps

- Anti-inflammatory injections are meant to reduce swelling and irritation in a sore area.
- Because of this, we recommend that you rest for about one week after the injection and avoid heavy activity.

- The next step is usually to see a physiotherapist.
- They will help you start the right exercises and treatment to help the injection work as well as possible.
- Ongoing physiotherapy can be arranged at one of our other locations, depending on which one is closest to you and when our clinicians are available.
- **Please remember!** If you notice any signs of infection - if the area is becoming very red, hot, swollen, or extremely painful (this is very rare) - you should see a doctor urgently or go to A&E.
- Take this leaflet with you so you can show them what procedure you had.

What is Cortisone?

- A corticosteroid is a medicine that helps reduce swelling, stiffness, and pain by calming down inflammation.
- Steroids are chemicals your body makes naturally. A corticosteroid injection can help reduce pain in your joints (like with arthritis) or in soft tissues (like tendinitis) by lowering inflammation.

What are the possible side effects?

These are very rare, and your clinician will discuss them with you before your injection. They include:

1. Flushing of the face for a few hours
2. Infection: If the area becomes hot, swollen and painful for more than 24 hours, **you should be seen by a doctor immediately**
3. A small area of fat loss or change in colour of the skin around the injection site.
4. Diabetic patients may notice a temporary increase in blood sugar levels
5. Temporary increase in pain in the joint. This happens rarely, and is called a 'post-injection flare'

How long will the injection last?

- This is a hard question to answer.
- For some people, one injection clears up the inflamed area. For others, the injection helps for many months, giving them time to rest and do their physiotherapy exercises.
- Other times, the injection does not work.

Why would I have an injection?

- The idea behind having this is to allow you to increase movement and strength.
- Most often, an injection is not enough on its own to improve your symptoms and keep them away long-term.
- Doing exercises at home or with a physiotherapist is usually very important. Your doctor or clinician will tell you the best time to start your rehabilitation.

Can I take my regular medication?

- You should continue to take all of your usual medication unless told otherwise.
- Regular painkillers, like paracetamol are fine to take as well.

Will my GP be informed?

- Normally after your injection a letter is written and sent to your GP.
- Your MSKCATS clinician may wish to follow you up with you face to face or by telephone appointment to see the effects of the injection.

How many injections can I have?

- This depends on the part of the body involved and will be decided by your clinician and yourself.
- **Most of the time, one injection is enough.**
- If the pain is very bad or has lasted a long time, you might need more.
- Usually, you won't have more than three injections in the same joint.

Feeling unwell?

- If you are feeling unwell with a cold, flu, or another virus, it's not a good idea to have the injection.
- It is better to wait and book a new time so your body can fight the illness first.
- Please call us on 020 7288 5176 and let us know if you cannot make your appointment for these reasons.

More information

For up to date information on Musculoskeletal Services (MSK), please visit our website: www.whittington.nhs.uk/msk

Contact our service

MSK CATS and Physiotherapy Services

Tel.: 0207 288 3317

Email: whh-tr.mskinterfaceservice@nhs.net

Contact our Trust

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern, please contact our Patient advice and liaison service (PALS) on **020 7288 5551** or whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net.

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet, please email whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net. We will try our best to meet your needs.

020 7272 3070 | Whittington Health NHS Trust, Magdala Avenue, London, N19 5NF
www.whittington.nhs.uk | x.com/WhitHealth | facebook.com/WhittingtonHealth

Document information

Date published: 10/02/2026 | Review date: 10/02/2028 | Ref: ACS/MSKCATS/PMSKIT/01
© Whittington Health NHS Trust. Please recycle.