



What is Cortisone?

Cortisone is a type of steroid that can greatly reduce inflammation (swelling, redness, irritation). Most cortisone that is injected into the body is synthetic analogue of the body's natural hormone, cortisol (hydrocortisone). Cortisone is unlike steroids some athletes take and won't make you gain weight or get bigger muscles. Since it is injected into an inflamed region and not taken as a pill, little of it goes beyond that region. It therefore has less systemic side effects than oral forms. Injections of cortisone are most noted for its ability to suppress some parts of the immune system that can lead to decreased inflammation and subsequent reduction of pain in an affected area.



Why have a Cortisone Injection?

By using the method of injection, the cortisone quickly and directly reaches the inflamed area. Injecting cortisone is less complex and invasive than having surgery and provides an alternative that can provide long lasting pain relief. It can help you get out and enjoy life again.



Who is a candidate for Cortisone?

Injecting cortisone can relieve pain caused from a variety of injuries, such as sports injury, or pain from arthritis. It can be used for treating inflammation, a sprain, or other ailments. Your doctor may suggest an injection if resting, wearing splints, or taking oral medications doesn't relieve your pain. Over the course of treatment, your doctor may not inject the same region more than a few times.

What are the potential negative side effects?

Cortisone injections are overall very safe and effective when used appropriately. However, like every medication, it has potential risks and complications in addition to its positive effects:

- Locally, cortisone injections can cause post-injection flaring of pain, loss of skin pigmentation, bleeding or bruising at the injection site, tendon rupture, or even infection in the soft tissues or within the joint. These are mostly a result of an individual's reaction to the medication and do not occur commonly.
- Systemically, cortisone injections can cause flushing in the face which can occur one to two days after an injection, lasting for up to three days, and is usually not concerning.
- Diabetics receiving injections should be aware that administered cortisone can temporarily suppress the production of the natural cortisol hormone in the body. This can keep sugar from being absorbed normally in the tissues, thus causing transient increased blood sugar levels (hyperglycemia). With normal injection amounts this is rarely seen.

If you experience worsening pain 3-4 days after your injection rather than improvement, or signs and symptoms including: increased swelling, warmth, wound drainage, or a fever greater than 100.4 degrees, please contact our office.

Your Injection Experience

Being injected with cortisone is simple and doesn't take long. Your doctor may ask you questions about your health because certain medical conditions, such as diabetes, can be affected by cortisone.

The day of your injection

Your doctor will start by cleaning your skin at the injection site. Next, you'll be injected with local anesthetics (short term pain relief) and cortisone. It may take a moment for your doctor to place the needle in the precise region. The size of the needle varies based on the location of the injection, but always the smallest needle is chosen to deliver adequate medication. A small bandage will be placed over the injection site and you'll be ready to go home.

The Next Day or Two

Most patients notice a response to the cortisone 4-5 days after the injection, but it may take up to 2 weeks to reach its maximal effect. Some patients feel more pain after being injected – this is normal and it will dissipate over the next several days.



Our advice is to rest for the first day or two. Take it easy and relax.

After Your Injection

After being injected, make sure you don't injure the treated region. Stay active. Enjoy a walk or some other mild activity. Just be careful not to strain the region that gave you trouble.

Prognosis

Each patient has a variable sensitivity to cortisone, and so it is impossible to predict how well or long a cortisone injection will work for each patient. Patients gain relief anywhere from a few months to years of relief. You may receive repeat injections if your pain does return. These decisions are made on an individual basis between the patient and your doctor.

CORTISONE INJECTION



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