



Blackrock Clinic

A PATIENT'S GUIDE TO
Joint Injections



Blackrock Clinic

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Welcome to Blackrock Clinic Outpatients Department

What is an ultra-Articular joint injection?

Injections into joints are called ultra-articular injections. If you have a swollen or painful joint the radiologist may inject a steroid medication into the joint. Sometimes the doctor may inject a local anaesthetic (numbing medicine) along with the steroid.

Is there any necessary preparation?

Medications: It is important to make us aware of any medications you may be taking before coming in for the injection, e.g. any blood thinners such as Aspirin, Warfarin, or Plavix. We will advise you if you need to cease any medications at the time of making the appointment.

What to bring: All insurance details are required on the day of your procedure as on arrival, you will be requested to fill in the appropriate insurance forms. Depending on policy type, there may be a shortfall or excess to pay on the day. Any relevant scans should be brought for the procedure.

What to tell us: It is important to make us aware of any allergies you may have. Woman of child bearing age must inform us of any chance of pregnancy or if currently breastfeeding.

What to wear: You may wear anything you feel most comfortable in, depending on the area to be scanned and injected, you may be asked to remove items of clothing and jewellery and put on a gown provided. You may eat as normal, however, please do not eat a heavy meal before the procedure.

Is there any necessary preparation?

Each patient is individual and will receive a different injection. The radiologist will provide each patient with a detailed explanation of what will happen and an informed consent will be signed only after it is agreed that you understand and are happy with the examination. The radiologist will use the fluoroscopy (x-ray) machine to find the area of interest to be injected, and may mark the skin with a small pen.

A local anaesthetic may be injected under the skin to minimize the pain of the injection. Sometimes a small amount of contrast (x-ray dye) will be injected into the joint to confirm the correct position of the needle. A steroid medication, which is related to Cortisone, and a long acting anaesthetic will follow.

Aftercare instructions

It is not unusual to feel some discomfort or pain. This may take up to 48 hours to pass. Should you experience discomfort you may take any pain-killer or anti-inflammatory medication following your doctor or pharmacists instructions. It may take up to 3 weeks before you start to notice real relief from the injection.

Travelling: Dependant on the area of the injection, it is advisable to have somebody to drive you home. The local anaesthetic may cause you to feel a residual numbness. You should not drive for the remainder of the day.

Activity: Instruction should be sought from the referring doctor as to what level of activity can begin post injection.

Complications/risks: This procedure is well-established and safe when performed in a controlled setting. However, with any interventional procedure there are risks, side effects and a possibility of

complications. Complications include haematoma at the site of injection, worsening of symptoms, bleeding, sleep disturbance, flushing, transient increase in blood sugars in patients with diabetes and infection.

Signs of infection include sweats, shakes and fever with possible redness and heat at the injection site and worsening of symptoms.

Infection is rare, occurring in approximately 1 in 10,000 cases but can be serious and will require intense antibiotic treatment.

Should you develop symptoms which you are concerned about or you experience severe pain following an injection, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Freephone 1800 300 200