

Patient Advice sheet - steroid injection therapy

WHAT DOES THE INJECTION DO?

It suppresses inflammation in the tissues and helps combat musculo-skeletal pain. Many patients obtain lasting relief of symptoms.

WHAT IS THE INJECTION?

The injection comprises of 2 ingredients:

- (1) Local anaesthetic (marcaine), which is used to aid the diagnosis and diminish pain.
- (2) Slow release steroid (depo-medrone), which is an anti-inflammatory medication to reduce swelling.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS?

Most common: (1) Post injection flare - you may experience a temporary worsening of pain and sometimes there is a little swelling and local heat. This reaction is quite rare with the depo-medrone we use. The flare is temporary and will settle quickly if an oral NSAID like Ibuprofen, or analgesia like paracetamol is taken. An ice pack over the area may also help. (2) Facial flushing - reddening of the face may very occasionally occur, but this usually only lasts 24 - 48 hrs and is not uncomfortable. (3) Menstrual irregularity - this is very rare with the low dosages of cortico-Steroids we use. (4) Skin changes - slight discoloration and thinning of the skin may occasionally occur locally at the site of the injection.

Very Rare: (1) Diabetes - if you are a diabetic, you may experience transient upset of your glucose control, so it is important to monitor your sugar levels for up to 2 weeks after your injection. (2) Tendon rupture - this is very rare as a result of our injection. (3) Allergy - this is a very rare reaction. It occurs within minutes of the injection and we have full medical facilities to hand.

WHAT SHOULD I DO OR EXPECT AFTER THE INJECTION:

Anti-inflammatory effect: this starts 24-36 hours after the injection and will continue to work for up to 3 weeks, and may give long lasting benefits.

Do not: undertake the sport or repetitive activity which caused your problem for 1 week after your injection. You may require physiotherapy to prevent recurrence of your problem. This will be decided upon at your follow-up appointment at the Mid Yorkshire shoulder unit.

Flare: if the area becomes hot and swollen, contact your GP or the unit as soon as possible.

Seek advice: if you are at all concerned.