

PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING AN IMAGING-GUIDED THERAPEUTIC INJECTION

Your physician has sent you for an image-guided injection. The mixture injected may consist of an anesthetic, steroid or a combination of both. The following are answers to frequently asked questions.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

The anesthetic utilized to numb the skin generally wears off in 1-2 hours. Mild pain and swelling may occur at the injection site at this time. This can usually be treated with application of an ice pack and over-the-counter pain medication.

Bleeding at the site of the injection can occur, but usually subsides within a short period of time. If a Band-Aid has been placed over the site, it may be removed within 2-3 hours following the procedure. There are no restrictions regarding bathing as a result of the procedure.

If a longer-acting anesthetic has been injected for diagnostic purposes, it will keep the area numb for approximately 4-5 hours. If steroid has been administered, it generally begins to have an effect 48-72 hours following the procedure. Depending on the area injected, this effect may be delayed up to 1 to 2 weeks.

WHAT CAN I DO? WHAT SHOULD I NOT DO?

While the long-acting anesthetic agent is working, the area injected will be numb. You must be particularly careful not to traumatize the area during this time. Following a steroid injection it is advisable to **limit activities for 24 to 48 hours** (unless otherwise directed). Many patients experience dramatic relief of symptoms after a therapeutic injection. This should not be an indication to resume activities previously prohibited by your physician without consultation as this may result in further injury at the site.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS?

Infection

Infection is a rare, but serious complication of any injection. It can take several days to develop, resulting in pain, swelling and redness at the site as well as fever and chills. If you experience these symptoms immediately contact us or your referring physician.

Bleeding

Rarely, patients may experience continued bleeding at the site. The application of direct pressure will result in cessation of most bleeding. Uncontrollable deep or superficial bleeding should be reported.

Tendon or Ligament Rupture

The local injection of steroids may result in weakening of tendons and ligaments. They are most susceptible to injury in the first 2-3 days. Activity should be restricted during this time period or as otherwise directed.

Flare Response

On rare occasions, steroid may produce inflammation localized to the injection site. This usually resolves within a day or so and may be treated with ice and oral anti-inflammatory medication. Temporary flushing and a feeling of warmth may also occur the day after the procedure.

Skin Discoloration

Discoloration and/or dimpling of the skin at the injection site may take a month or longer to develop. This is very rare and tends to occur when the injection is near the skin surface. The skin will generally not return to a normal appearance.

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS IF ANY

If you have any additional questions, please contact us.

Thank you.