



CORTISONE STEROID INJECTION - JOINT PAIN RELIEF

WHAT IS A STEROID INJECTION?

Steroid injections have served as a prompt & efficient remedy for various soft tissue conditions, joint pain, & body-wide inflammation. These synthetic steroids emulate the naturally occurring steroids in the body & are administered directly to the afflicted area or joint through injection. Their mechanism involves diminishing inflammation. It's important to note that these steroids differ from anabolic steroids commonly employed in bodybuilding.

At Bodylogics, steroid injections complement an individually customised client assessment & rehabilitation programme, promoting optimal recovery for sports or pain-free daily activities. While this document will outline several advantages of steroid injections, any questions or concerns can be addressed by reaching out to our clinical specialists for guidance.

WHAT WOULD WE RECOMMEND STEROID INJECTIONS FOR?

Steroid injections are frequently suggested for individuals experiencing painful conditions such as osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, various forms of inflammatory arthritis, bursitis, & tendinitis. These injections are employed to alleviate inflammation, thereby potentially diminishing pain. Additionally, steroid injections can contribute to the reduction of joint swelling & pain, facilitating improved mobility & function in the affected joint & surrounding soft tissues.

It's crucial to recognise that steroid injections do not provide a permanent solution for these conditions. They may not be suitable for everyone & should only be administered by a qualified healthcare professional.



WHAT'S IN A STEROID INJECTION?

Our Clinical Specialist will administer a small amount of steroid directly into the affected joint/soft tissue to locally reduce inflammation. In some cases, this may be combined with a local anaesthetic, serving as a painkiller & potentially offering immediate, albeit temporary, pain relief.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO START FEELING THE BENEFITS OF A STEROID INJECTION?

Local anaesthetics can swiftly alleviate your pain within a few minutes of the injection. While the effects of the local anaesthetic diminish quickly, you may experience some numbness that could persist for up to 24 hours. The steroid's impact will take a bit longer to manifest, typically within 1-2 days to a week.

During this period, you can employ gentle movement, pain relief medication, or apply ice or heat packs to manage your pain. It is advisable to incorporate a few days of relative rest, avoiding vigorous or excessive exercise & minimising stress on the injected joint or affected area after the procedure.

HOW LONG WILL I FEEL THE EFFECTS FOR AFTER THE INJECTION?

Typically, the effects of steroid injections endure for about three months, though individual responses can vary. These injections induce an anti-inflammatory response that can alleviate pain & swelling, enabling you to concentrate on your rehabilitation exercises. As a result, this contributes to improved function & enhanced pain management.

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR THE INJECTION?

Wearing loosely fitting clothes can enhance comfort, & it is recommended to have easy access to the joint or area undergoing injection. After the procedure, you might be asked to wait in the clinic reception for 15-20 minutes as a precaution. This ensures that, in the rare event of any adverse reaction to the injection, you are in a healthcare setting. If local anaesthetic is administered, arranging transportation for the journey home is advisable, as numbness may impede your ability to drive safely.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT FROM MY VISIT?

Our recommended Clinical Specialist will conduct a thorough assessment to determine whether an injection is the suitable treatment for your symptoms.

We'll work out what is causing the pain & use ultrasound or MRI if necessary. Once we've diagnosed the problem, we'll then recommend the appropriate type of injection. We also use ultrasound to deliver the injection, targeting the precise area that is causing the pain.

You'll receive guidance on risk factors, appropriate advice, & be empowered to make an informed decision regarding the suitability of an injection as a form of treatment. Depending on the location & nature of the pain & inflammation, steroids can be administered into an inflamed joint, soft tissues adjacent to a joint (such as bursa and tendons), or into muscle.

CAN I TAKE MY NORMAL MEDICATION?

In general, you can continue taking your regular medications as prescribed alongside steroid injections. However, if you are using blood thinners, it's important to consult with your GP & undergo a blood test to ensure that your blood is at an appropriate level, reducing the risk of excessive bleeding into the joint. Your doctor may recommend adjusting your anti-coagulant dosage before the injection.

Additionally, certain vaccines function by administering a small dose of a disease to prompt your body to develop immunity. Since steroid injections temporarily lower the body's immune response, it's advisable to avoid them if you have recently had or are planning to receive a vaccination. Consult with your doctor to determine the appropriate timing for your steroid injection after the vaccination to mitigate the risk of infection or illness.



WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL RISKS & SIDE EFFECTS?

Many individuals undergo steroid injections without experiencing any side effects. It is common to feel slight discomfort & pressure during the injection, but most people find it less severe than anticipated. Occasionally, post-injection pain within the first 24 hours may occur, typically resolving on its own within a few days, although painkillers such as paracetamol can be taken for relief. Some individuals may observe temporary flushing of the face for a few hours.

While steroid injections generally pose a small risk of local skin thinning or colour changes at the injection site, there is also a rare but serious risk of infection either at the injection site or in the joint. If the joint becomes red, hot, or painful, seeking prompt medical attention is crucial, especially if feeling unwell. In individuals with diabetes, steroid injections should be approached with caution as they may temporarily elevate blood sugar levels. The steroid dose used is typically very low, minimising the likelihood of experiencing common side effects associated with steroid tablets.

It's important to exercise caution regarding the frequency of injections, with a recommended limit of no more than 3 per year or within a 3-month period in the same area. In rare instances, women may experience temporary disruptions in their menstrual cycles after a steroid injection. Additionally, steroid injections can potentially impact mood, causing individuals to feel very high or low. If there is a history of mood disturbances, it is advisable to discuss this with a doctor before undergoing an injection.

HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS?

For any further information or to book your appointment, please contact the Bodylogics team on 020 3903 8222

