

Joint (HCLA) Injection

Your doctor has asked for a joint injection to be performed. We have designed this brochure to help you prepare for your procedure.

HCLA refers to the combination of hydrocortisone (HC) and local anaesthetic (LA) which is usually injected. Injections into a joint can be performed for therapeutic or diagnostic purposes. The reasons for therapeutic joint injection can include the treatment of inflammation (arthritis) and joint related tendonitis or bursitis. Injections performed as a diagnostic procedure help decide if pain is coming from the injected joint or related structure. If the injection helps the pain then it is likely the area injected is the source of pain. If the injection does not help the pain then further investigations to locate the source of the pain may be required. Most injections are performed using ultrasound guidance.

Preparation

- There is no specific preparation.
- Please bring previous x-rays and ultrasound, CT or MRI scans if they were not performed within our clinic.

Procedure

- You may be asked to change into a gown depending on the area to be injected.
- The overlying skin will be cleaned with an antiseptic solution and may be numbed with a local anaesthetic. A needle will then be placed into the injection site by the specialist Radiologist using ultrasound to confirm exact positioning. The HCLA mixture is then injected. The needle is removed and a small dressing applied.

Post procedure

- You are likely to experience pain relief for a few hours from the effects of the local anaesthetic component of the injection. This will wear off and there may be a return of symptoms for 24-48 hours until the hydrocortisone starts to take effect. Take your usual pain medication if this occurs.
- You should avoid strenuous activity for 24 hours.
- The dressing can be removed the day after the procedure.
- If the injection is successful then relief of symptoms for a period up to 4 months may be expected although individual results are very variable. Injections can be repeated although there is a limit to the number of injections that can be performed.



If you experience bleeding or excessive bruising/swelling, redness or other evidence of infection please contact our clinic nurses between 8.00am and 6.00pm. Outside these hours please contact your local emergency centre or referring doctor.