

After your injection

After the injection you will be taken back to the day surgery unit where you will be advised to rest for about 30 minutes. During this time the clinic nurse will assess you, to ensure that you are ready to return home.

How will I feel?

You will experience back discomfort for a few days and may feel 'bruised'. We normally suggest taking things gently during this time. Please use your usual analgesics as prescribed.

The pain relieving effect of these injections may not be apparent for up to two weeks. If pain relief following the injections is disappointing for you, it probably suggests that although the facet joint inflammation has been treated the muscle pain and lack of function is the on-going problem. This can and usually will improve over time.

What happens next?

Follow up arrangements will be discussed with you prior to discharge from hospital. For further information or advice, contact the Pain Department on:

01483 571122, extension **2735**

Reference Source

- www.eorthopod.com/facet-joint-injections/topic/184

Contact details

Royal Surrey County Hospital (RSCH) NHS Foundation Trust fully subscribes to the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) *Being Open* best practice framework, November 2010.

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located in far left corner as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–4.00pm
Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

Review date: November 2017
Author: Karen Cox
PIN141105–120



© Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust 2015

Facet Joint Injections



Pain



This leaflet will help you to understand more about facet joint injections. If you have any further questions or if there is anything you do not understand, please feel free to ask any of the nurses or your doctor.

What are facet joints?

Facet joints are small, paired joints (left and right) located along the length of your spine that link the vertebrae together. If the joints are worn, traumatised, subject to repeated stress or inflamed they may give rise to pain. This can lead to stiffness, muscle weakness and loss of movement.

One way of finding out whether facet joints are the source of pain is to perform facet joint injections. This involves injecting local anaesthetic (to numb) and steroid (anti-inflammatory) around the small nerves to the facet joints under x-ray guidance to see if the pain is reduced.

What are the benefits of facet joint injections?

Facet joint injections aim to reduce pain by treating the inflammation around the joint. This will allow you to start increasing your exercise regime to strengthen the muscles, and begin normal movement again.

Does the injection have any risks or side effects?

Injections are safe and unlikely to result in a complication, but no injection is 100% foolproof. Facet joint injections are safe and simple; with x-ray guidance the chances of harm are small. Precautions are always taken to minimize the risk as far as possible.

The steroids should have very little effect on the body. However:

- People who have diabetes may find that their blood sugars become worse for a few days.
- Some women experience facial flushing lasting a few days, and menstruation (periods) can become irregular for a month or two.

What are the alternatives to facet joint injections?

Alternatives will have been discussed with you at your consultation. These can include measures such as physiotherapy, medication and acupuncture.

Before your injection

Please arrive in good time for your appointment and allow time for car parking at the hospital. We don't recommend that you drive yourself home, so please arrange to have someone with you or to collect you.

On arrival at the clinic

Please report to the reception of the Day Surgical Unit. You will then be shown into the waiting area, until you are called.

Prior to the injection you will be assessed by the nursing staff who will ask you basic information about your health. Your blood pressure and pulse will also be recorded.

Prior to the injection the doctor or nurse will explain the treatment. You will be able to ask any questions you like about the treatment. When you are completely satisfied, you will be asked to sign a form giving your consent.

How is the injection performed?

You will need to undress and put on a hospital gown prior to being escorted to the treatment room for the injection. You will be asked to lie face down onto the x-ray table and to expose the relevant area.

The skin is cleaned with an antiseptic solution. The skin over each joint to be treated is injected with local anaesthetic; this may sting a little. The doctor will then position a fine needle into the joint under x-ray guidance. Once in position the injection is given.