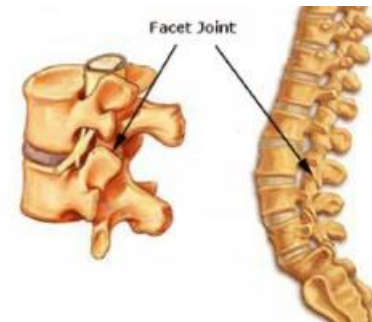


What is a facet joint steroid injection?

Your doctor has recommended a facet joint steroid injection as part of the management of your back pain.

Each vertebra is connected to the one above and below it by four facet joints. They allow the vertebral column to move. Instability, degenerative arthritis and inflammation of the facet joints can cause significant pain.

Facet joints are supplied with nerves that sense pain. An injection of steroids and local anaesthetic into these joints may cause a reduction in nerve activity, which reduces the pain. The effect usually lasts 3 -6 months and can take up to 2 weeks after the injection to reach its maximum effect.



Preparation

If you are on blood thinning agents such as Warfarin or Clopidogrel, you will need to see your doctor prior to the procedure as these medications may need to be ceased. A blood test will also need to be completed prior to the procedure to check the clotting time.

It is recommended that you arrange for someone to take you home after the injection as a precaution.

Procedure

The procedure involves inserting a needle into the facet joint. When the needle is positioned in the joint, a solution is injected containing steroid medication and long acting local anaesthetic. The procedure is done with CT guidance in the Medical Imaging Department.

Risks of facet joint steroid injection

Risks can include:

Common

- Mild back aches
- Muscle spasm
- Increase in back pain due to the pressure of the fluid injected

Rare

- Infection
- Allergic reactions

Post Procedure

After the procedure, you will be observed in the Medical Imaging Department for about 30 minutes, after which you are allowed to go home.

You must not perform any activity that will strain your back such as heavy lifting. You are advised not to drive for 24 hours. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact Medical Imaging Reception on (03) 5352 9325 or your doctor.



Integrity



Excellence



Community



Working Together



Learning Culture

EGHS would like to thank our consumers for reviewing this information.

