



LEARNING ABOUT JOINT INJECTIONS

What are joint injections?

Joint injections are shots into a joint, such as the knee or shoulder. They are used to inject medicines, such as pain relievers and steroids. Steroids can help reduce inflammation. A steroid shot can sometimes help with short-term pain relief when other treatments haven't worked.

How are they done?

First, the area over the joint will be cleaned. Your doctor may then use a tiny needle to numb the skin in the area where you will get the joint injection. If a tiny needle is used to numb the area, your doctor will use another needle to inject the medicine. Your doctor may use a pain reliever, a steroid, or both. You may feel some pressure or discomfort. Your doctor may put ice on the area before you go home.

What can you expect after a joint injection?

You will go home soon after your injection. You may have numbness around the joint for a few hours. If your injection included both a pain reliever and a steroid, then the pain will probably go away right away, however, it might come back after a few hours. This might happen if the pain reliever wears off and the steroid hasn't started to work yet. Steroids don't always work, but when they do, the pain relief can last for several days to a few months or longer.

Your doctor may tell you to use ice on the area. You can also use ice if the pain comes back. Put ice or a cold pack on your joint for 10 to 20 minutes at a time. Put a thin cloth between the ice and your skin. Follow your doctor's instructions carefully. Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.