

Coastal Pain & Spine Center

Bursitis

What is bursitis?

Bursitis is the inflammation of a bursa, a fluid-filled space surrounding a bony prominence. After years of stressing the areas around your joints, these sacs or bursa may become inflamed. This inflammation can cause pain. Bursa are located in a variety of areas though most commonly noted or inflamed at the Greater Trochanter (side of hip), Ischial Tuberosity (“sit bones”), Subacromial/Subscapular (shoulder), to name a few among others. When irritated or inflamed, you may notice a dull ache or stiffness that can be aggravated by movement and pressure over the area.

How is bursitis treated?

In many cases, treatment is simple and includes resting and immobilizing the affected area, applying ice to reduce swelling and taking non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs to relieve pain and reduce inflammation. With this self-care treatment, the bursitis usually disappears within a week or two. If there is no relief using this conservative treatment, your interventional pain doctor may inject a corticosteroid medication into the bursa to help relieve inflammation, after which relief is generally obtained within one to two weeks.

What are the risks of the procedure?

As with most procedures, there is a remote risk of bleeding, infection, nerve injury or allergic reaction to the medications used. Some short-term side effects may occur, as well. You may have increased pain for a few days after the injection, including localized pain at the injection site. Diabetics may have a short-term elevation of blood sugars. People prone to fluid retention may have increased fluid retention for one to two weeks.

What happens during the procedure?

When you enter the clinic, you will be taken into an admission room where a nurse will check your vitals. Please wear loose-fitting clothing and note that you may be asked to change into a hospital gown. Once you have been escorted to the procedure room, our nursing staff will then position you on a narrow table. The site of the procedure will be cleaned with iodine and sterilely draped. Once sterilized, the physician will numb your skin with a small needle – the numbing process may sting. Do your best to lay still and let us know if we are causing you discomfort.

Depending on the location of the bursitis, the doctor will use anatomic landmarks or a X-ray machine (fluoroscope) to guide the needle into the correct spot. Local anesthetic and steroid are then injected through the needle, and the needle is removed. Your skin will be cleaned, and a Band-Aid applied. The procedure will last approximately 5-15 minutes. Your pain may improve immediately after the injection, due to the local anesthetic. The steroid usually takes two or three days to have an effect and peaks in about two weeks.

What happens after the procedure?

You will be taken back to the recovery area for a short while for observation. If you experience local tenderness from the needles, ice may help relieve the discomfort. You can also resume taking your normal pain medications.

Will I have any restrictions after the procedure?

Following your procedure, if you have had sedation, you are not allowed to drive for the remainder of the day. An adult must be present to drive you home or to escort you on another form of transportation. This is for your own safety. Otherwise, you may do whatever you feel up to doing.

Thank you for allowing Coastal Pain & Spine Center to care for you!
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