



LEARNING ABOUT FACET INJECTIONS

What is a facet joint injection?

A facet joint injection is an injection of medicine to help with pain from post-traumatic facet pain or other causes. It goes into your neck or back, wherever your pain is. Facet joints connect your vertebrae to each other. You get an injection of numbing medication, then steroid medicine to reduce pain and swelling.

How is a facet joint injection done?

You may get pre-op medicine to help you relax. The doctor will use a tiny needle to numb the skin in the area where you are getting the facet joint injection. After the skin is numb, your doctor will use a larger needle for the actual facet joint injection. The doctor will use X-rays to help guide the needle into the facet joint. You may feel some pressure, but you should not feel pain.

What can you expect after a facet joint injection?

You will probably go home about an hour after your injection. You may have numbness for a few hours. The numbness could be in your neck or back, or your arm or leg, depending on where you got the injection. Your pain may be gone right away, but it may return after a few hours or days. This is because the steroid medicine has not started to work yet. Steroids don't always work. When they do, it takes a few days. But when they work, the pain relief can last for several days to a few months or longer. You may want to do less than normal for a few days. But you may also be able to return to your daily routine. It's usually best to increase your activities slowly over time. Follow your doctor's instructions carefully.

How long does a facet joint injection take?

The procedure takes 10 to 30 minutes.