

## **Sacroiliac Joint Injections**

A sacroiliac joint injection is an injection of local anesthetic and steroid into the sacroiliac joint (SI joint). The SI joint connects the pelvis to the sacrum.

The goal of this injection is to further confirm the diagnosis (cause of your pain) and provide relief the pain by reducing the inflammation.

It is not unusual for someone to need more than one injection to get long-term benefit. If the pain is significantly improved, no further injection is needed unless the pain begins to come back. Typically, we try to limit the number of injections to three per year and at that amount any long-term negative effects of the medication are avoided.

### **What are the risks of the procedure?**

Complications are very rare and include bleeding, infection, and allergic reaction to the medication.

Some short-term side effects may occur. If local anesthetic spreads to nearby nerves, you may have weakness or numbness that can last for one to two hours. If this happens you will have to stay in the clinic until this resolves.

You may have increased pain for a few days after the injection. People with diabetes may have short-term elevation of blood sugar. The procedure cannot be performed if you have an active infection, flu, cold, fever, or very high blood pressure. For your safety, please make your doctor aware of any of these conditions.

If you have a history of high anxiety related to medical procedures- or nausea, excessive sweating, fainting, or dizziness/lightheadedness with previous medical procedures; oral valium is recommended and can be prescribed for you to take prior to the injection. This will very likely eliminate these reactions (called vaso-vagal reactions). If this is needed, please mention it to our staff so that we can get you the prescription in a timely manner.

### **Will the injection hurt?**

Most people say the stinging/burning of the numbing medicine is the most uncomfortable part of the procedure, although every person's response to any procedure is individual.

### What happens during the actual procedure?

The procedure will be performed while you are in the prone position. The buttock area is then cleansed with an antiseptic soap. The skin is numbed and this is felt as a stinging or burning sensation. The needle is then advanced into the joint space. Pressure is the usual sensation. If you feel pain, more local anesthetic will be used. Once the needle is in the joint space, the medication is infused and the procedure is complete. Your skin will be cleansed and a bandage will be applied. Your blood pressure will be checked, and you will be able to leave with your ride after the doctor authorizes your discharge.

### How will I feel after the injection?

Most people feel temporarily improved due to the numbing medicine. There is a possibility that your symptoms are temporarily worsened. The steroid takes two to three days to start to have an effect in most people, and it peaks in about two weeks. Some local tenderness may be experienced for a couple of days after the injection. Using an ice pack three to four times a day will help this. You may take your usual pain medications as well after the injection.

### Will I have any restrictions on the day of the procedure?

You may not drive if you have any numbness in the leg/foot which is possible but not common after this procedure. You must have a driver, or else you must wait at least 30 minutes and assess for any numbness or weakness before driving. You should not take a tub bath, or soak in water (such as a pool or hot tub) for two days following the injection. We request that you take a shower prior to the injection. You may eat, drink and take your medications (even blood thinners), as usual on the day of the procedure (both before and after) unless told otherwise by your doctor.