



PATIENT TEACHING HANDOUT

Sacroiliac Joint Injection

What is a sacroiliac joint injection?

A sacroiliac joint injection is an injection of local anesthetic and corticosteroid anti-inflammatory medication into the sacroiliac joint under fluoroscopy (X-ray) and/or ultrasound guidance.

What are the goals of a sacroiliac joint injection?

- to aid in diagnosing the cause of your pain,
- to reduce and possibly eliminate your pain, and
- to increase function.

How will a sacroiliac joint injection help my condition?

The corticosteroid medication is similar to the corticosteroid chemical that is normally manufactured by your body. Corticosteroids act to decrease inflammation and swelling that can cause pain and limit function.

To obtain the best benefit with the least side effects, the amount of corticosteroid in a sacroiliac joint injection is carefully monitored. You will be limited to no more than 3 of these procedures in a 6-month period.

How do I prepare for a sacroiliac joint injection?

- If you are taking any anticoagulant ("blood thinner") medication, tell your doctor before scheduling the procedure.
- You are not permitted to drive after your procedure. You must have someone to drive you home.
- Unless your doctor advises otherwise, 10 days before your procedure, STOP taking any Aspirin-containing products.
- Starting 3 days before your procedure, STOP taking any nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil), or naproxen (Aleve).
- You may eat a light meal before your procedure.
- PLEASE COME TO YOUR INJECTION IN PAIN; Avoid taking your pain medications the morning of the procedure.

What happens during a sacroiliac joint injection?

- You will be positioned lying face down with pillows for comfort.
- The area for the injection will be washed with an antiseptic solution and covered with sterile drapes.
- The doctor will inject local anesthetic to numb the injection site.
- An X-ray machine (fluoroscopy) and ultrasound machine will be used to guide placement of the injection.
- Contrast agent will be injected to confirm proper needle placement prior to injecting the medication slowly.

How long is the procedure?

The entire procedure takes about 10 minutes to perform.

What happens after the procedure?

- The local anesthetic will begin working within 15 minutes following the procedure. The local anesthetic will wear off after 2-6 hours following the procedure. You may have temporary numbness, tingling, and/or weakness in your leg.
- The steroid medication takes 48 – 72 hours after your procedure to begin working.
- You may continue taking regularly scheduled medications.
- The day after your procedure, you may resume normal daily activities.
- You may have pain, bruising, and soreness for 2-3 days after the procedure. Use ice to alleviate the soreness.
- You will be instructed to call Pittsburgh Pain Physicians 1 week later with an update on your pain relief.

Please call Pittsburgh Pain Physicians if you notice any of the following: increased pain, swelling, redness, fever, severe headache, or worsening weakness in your arms or legs. If you are diabetic, your blood sugar may increase slightly after the procedure. Diabetic patients should monitor their blood sugar closely for 3 days following the procedure.

If you have any questions or concerns about this procedure please call Pittsburgh Pain Physicians at **412-533-2202**.

