

# INTRA-ARTICULAR JOINT INJECTIONS



## ■ WHAT IS AN INTRA-ARTICULAR JOINT INJECTION?

An intra-articular injection is a procedure used to treat joint pain. Usually this pain comes from inflammation (swelling) that happens from daily wear and tear.

## ■ PROCEDURE

During the procedure, medication is injected into the affected area. This medication is usually a mixture of local anesthetic and steroids which works to numb the area and lower inflammation. This should reduce your pain and improve the functionality in your joint. The provider will use a special X-ray to help view the target area. Your provider will inject a medication to numb the skin over the joint. Then your provider will inject the medication into your joint(s). The procedure will take about 15–20 minutes. You will be awake during the procedure and may ask questions at any time. You may feel anything from slight stinging and ache from the needle, or the numbing medication. You may also feel some pressure or an increase in your normal level of pain while the medication is being injected. Before you leave, you will be given instructions on how to care for yourself at home.

## ■ SIDE EFFECTS

Side effects from this procedure are rare. The most common side effect is temporary pain at the site of the injection.

## ■ POST PROCEDURE

Be as active as possible and do activities that usually cause pain in the affected/injected area. This will help your provider know whether the pain is caused by the affected/injected area. You may feel sore for a few days after the procedure. Use an ice pack at least 3–4 times a day to feel more comfortable. The local anesthetic will wear off in about 4 hours. At that time, your usual level of pain may return until the steroid starts working. This can take up to two weeks. Keep taking pain medications as prescribed if you need it. Pain relief from intra-articular injections usually will last for several months, but this may vary from patient to patient. You may have 3–4 steroid injections a year. If you get no relief from the injection, we will continue to work with you to find the source of your pain and explore other treatment options.