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neurosciencegroup

Your Guide to Facet Joint Injections

What is a Facet Joint Injection?

A Facet Joint Injection is a procedure in which a small needle is inserted into one of the facet joints (small joints that connect your vertebrae together and help you bend, move and twist) of the back or the neck. A steroid is then injected to aid in the relief of pain.

How can a Facet Joint Injection help me?

A Facet Joint Injection can be an effective nonsurgical treatment by reducing the inflammation around the facet joint to help ease your pain. This type of injection most often helps manage pain caused from joint degeneration and arthritis.

Will I have immediate relief after my Facet Joint Injection?

Facet Joint Injections typically do not have an immediate effect. Full effect of a facet joint injection usually occurs within 7-10 days after the injection. You may still feel pain relief immediately afterwards from an anesthetic that was used, however, it typically wears off in 4-8 hours.

How do I prepare for my Facet Joint Injection?

Ensure your doctor knows if:

You are taking Coumadin or any other blood thinners: *Plavix, Aspirin, Eliquis, Excedrin, fish oil, etc.*

You are taking steroids and or antibiotics.

You have liver or kidney disease: *chronic kidney disease, cirrhosis, etc.*

You have the following implantable devices: *medication pump, pacemaker, defibrillator, or stimulator.*

You have any allergies: *steroids, anesthetic, iodine, adhesive, contrast, shellfish.*

You have any questions regarding your medication.

You have had or are planning to have a vaccine within 2 weeks of your procedure.

****Please call to cancel your appointment if you have a fever, the flu, covid, or any other infection****

What can I do the day of my Facet Joint Injection?

- You may eat and drink normally; there is no need to fast.
- Take your normal medication on the day of your test, unless otherwise instructed.
- You will need to shower with antibacterial soap the day before and the day of your procedure.
- Do NOT apply lotions, creams, ointments, or gels the day of your procedure.
- Wear loose fitting clothing including elastic waist band pants/shorts.
- Do not plan any strenuous activity the day of your procedure.
- **Bring someone with you who can remain on campus to drive you home.**
(The length of the procedure itself is approximately 30 minutes).

What can I expect during the procedure?

You will need to be able to get yourself up onto the procedure table and position yourself on your stomach.

You will remain on your stomach for the entire length of the procedure.

The area of your injection will be cleansed with an antiseptic solution.

Your skin will be numbed with a local anesthetic.

Then the physician will use fluoroscopy (x-ray) to guide the placement of the needle into the facet space.

You may feel some pressure in the area during the injection. The physician will inject the medication slowly in order to decrease your discomfort.

Once the medication is injected, the needle is removed, the area will be cleaned off, a band aid will be applied, and the procedure is complete.

What happens after my Facet Joint Injection?

- You will spend about 10 minutes in the recovery room reviewing post-procedure instructions with the nurse prior to discharging. You may require a longer stay in recovery if additional monitoring is necessary.
- You will receive a pain diary after your procedure. **This will need to be filled out by you and you will need to call Neuroscience Group two weeks after your procedure to update us on the pain numbers you logged. Please do not lose or misplace your diary.**
- You may experience warmth, numbness, tingling, heaviness, or weakness to the area for up to 8 hours after your procedure.
- You will NOT be able to drive or operate heavy machinery for 8 hours after your procedure.
- If you are diabetic, you will notice a temporary increase in your blood sugars for up to a week if a steroid was used.
- You can shower after your procedure. However, NO SOAKING in tub, hot tub, pool, etc. for 24 hours.
- You will need to refrain from strenuous activity and heavy lifting for the remainder of the day.
- You may return to work the following day.

Questions about your facet joint injection?

Call Heather, our Physiatry Nurse Navigator, 920-725-9373