

Cortisone Injections

What is cortisone?

Cortisone is in a family of medications called corticosteroids, which are strong anti-inflammatory drugs. Corticosteroids are used for many conditions. They can be taken by mouth or in a variety of other ways including creams, inhalers, or injections (shots).

Corticosteroids are not the same as anabolic steroids. Because they have a similar name, they are sometimes confused. Anabolic steroids are a group of drugs that increase muscle mass and strength and are often used illegally by athletes and can have many harmful side effects.

What is a cortisone injection used for?

Dr. Norberg commonly uses cortisone injections to reduce inflammation (swelling and or pain) of a bursa, joint, or tendon in a specific area of the body such as the knee, elbow, or shoulder. Reducing the swelling helps relieve pain and discomfort and can speed up recovery from an injury.

How is the shot given?

The corticosteroid medicine is usually mixed with a local anesthetic and then injected into the injured area. At first, the shot may feel uncomfortable, but the local anesthetic will help with the discomfort.

Following the injection:

The local anesthetic will wear off in approximately 4-6 hours. You may experience some rebound pain at this point but don't be concerned that the injection didn't work, it can take up to 72 hours for the cortisone to take effect. If you do experience pain after the local wears off, Dr. Norberg suggests icing and resting the area. Over the counter pain relievers may help ease some of the discomfort. (i.e. Ibuprofen, Aleve or Tylenol)

Because of the local anesthetic, Dr. Norberg strongly encourages you NOT to engage in any excessive activity for the remainder of the day following your injection.

Relief from the injection may last several days to several months. The goal is to resolve the underlying problem during this time and to prevent a return of the pain and inflammation.

Approximately 5-10 minutes following your injection, someone from Dr. Norberg's team will be checking on your level of improvement.

We would like you to give a value on a scale from 0 to 100% of how much relief you got from the injection.

What are the risks?

Side effects from cortisone shots are rare. Possible side effects at the site where the injection was given can include:

- * slight discoloration of the skin
- * infection is possible but unlikely (1:10,000)
- * weakening of the tendons or tendon rupture (may be seen with multiple injections given at one site over a short period of time)
- * Diabetics may have a temporary increase in their blood sugar after the injection for 3-7 days

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