



Dupuytren's Contractures and Xiaflex Injections

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Xiaflex injections are a nonsurgical treatment for managing Dupuytren's contractures. Here is some information about Dupuytren's and its treatment options.

What is Dupuytren's?

This condition, named after the surgeon who described an operation for treating the malady, occurs when there is scarring and contractive tissue of the palmar fascia, causing a fixed flexion deformity of the affected finger or fingers. No matter how hard you try, you cannot straighten out your finger. Most commonly the ring and small fingers are afflicted, but it can occur in any digit. It can also develop in the feet, and for men, in the penis.

What causes it?

The mechanism behind why Dupuytren's occurs is not entirely understood. However, there are a number of factors that increase your risk of developing it:

- Northern European ancestry
- A diagnosis of diabetes
- Deep-tissue trauma, including any injury or surgery
- Deep-sea diving
- A history of Dilantin use
- Alcohol use

What are the symptoms?

Initially, you might notice a firm nodule, bump, or dimple in the palm of your hand at or near the base of one of your fingers. You also might feel a cord, or ridge, of tissue in your palm and extending to your finger. As the condition worsens, there is more pitting of the skin in the palm of your hand as well as progressive flexion of the finger toward your palm.

Dupuytren's contractures are not painful, but they are deforming and disabling. It is difficult to predict how quickly they will progress once they have appeared.

How is it treated?

There exist three primary ways to treat Dupuytren's. Invasive surgery involves excising the deforming tissue. A less invasive procedure, called needle aponeurotomy, involves simply cutting the Dupuytren's cord. Unfortunately, the risk of recurrence with this procedure is high since it is a deep-tissue trauma.

In recent years, an enzyme (collagenase clostridium histolyticum) has been developed to treat Dupuytren's. When Xiaflex is injected into a Dupuytren's cord, the enzyme dissolves the abundant palmar fascia at the injection site, allowing your finger to come out into full extension.



How do I schedule an injection?

The first step is to schedule an appointment to see if you are a candidate for the Xiaflex injection. Once it is determined that Xiaflex is the best option for you, your health insurance company will be contacted on your behalf for authorization of the injection. After the injection has been approved, you will need to schedule two more appointments to see Dr. McCarthy. At the first appointment, typically on a Tuesday, Dr. McCarthy will inject the affected finger or fingers with Xiaflex. You will then return to clinic two days later, on Thursday, for manipulation of the cord or cords that were injected. Following the manipulation, you will meet with a hand therapist for a custom splint that you will wear for 2 to 3 days after the manipulation and at night for the next few months. During the day, when you are not wearing the splint, you can use your hand normally.

If you wish to schedule an appointment to see Dr. McCarthy, please call 952-456-7000.

For more information, please visit www.xiaflex.com.