



## Sacroiliac (SI) Joint Injection Patient Education

Adam J. Michalik, DO | Phone: 651-351-2641

### WHAT IS A SACROILIAC JOINT?

Sacroiliac (SI) joints are formed by the connection between the sacrum and the ilium. Dysfunction of these joints can be caused by injury, inflammation, or irritation. The SI joint and/or the supporting ligaments can be painful. If the SI joint is blocked or anesthetized (i.e. numbed), they will not be able to transfer the painful sensation to the brain. This procedure is performed with diagnostic and therapeutic intent, meaning that it helps to diagnose whether the SI joints are the source of pain and to also treat the pain.

### HOW IS THE PROCEDURE PERFORMED?

The patient lies on his/her stomach. The skin of the low back and buttocks is cleansed with antiseptic solution and a sterile field is created. A small amount of anesthetic is used to numb the skin. Under X-ray guidance (fluoroscopy), a small needle is advanced into the targeted SI joint. A small amount of contrast dye is injected to ensure accurate needle placement, then a combination of local anesthetic and steroid is injected. The injection takes about 5-10 minutes to complete.

### HOW LONG DOES THE EFFECT LAST?

Pain relief from the local anesthetic typically only lasts a few hours. Pain relief from the steroid takes around 3-10 days to take effect and may last weeks to months. If the symptoms do return, we will discuss other options available for extended pain relief, including repeat injections or radiofrequency neurotomy of the nerves going to these joints.

### WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP AFTER THE INJECTION?

You may be given a pain log to complete after the procedure and instructions on how to return this information to Dr. Michalik's office. This will help us to measure your response to the injection and determine the next most appropriate step in your care.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND SIDE EFFECTS?

Serious side effects and complications are rare. The most common problem after the injection is having slightly increased pain in the area of the injection for up to a few days. The other potential complications are infection, bleeding and nerve injury. These complications are minimized by using sterile technique and fluoroscopic (x-ray) needle guidance. Some individuals may temporarily develop headaches, facial flushing, higher than normal blood pressure, and high blood sugar from the steroid, all of which typically resolve within a few days.