



Sacroiliac Joint Injection

WHY HAVE THIS PROCEDURE?

This procedure may be offered as part of a package of care to allow your pain specialist to diagnose the cause of your pain and to help understand your pain. It may also be performed to give you some temporary relief from your pain.

The sacroiliac joint is a large joint found on either side of the bottom of the spine where it connects to the pelvis. In some cases of back pain, the pain can come from the sacroiliac joint. An injection of local anaesthetic combined with steroid into the sacroiliac joint, can be helpful in diagnosing the cause of back pain and can also help reduce the pain.

The steroids used for pain management are not the anabolic type (bodybuilding) steroids; they are anti-inflammatory steroids, which can reduce swelling and inflammation that can sometimes be responsible for painful conditions.

THE PROCEDURE

This will be carried out in the operating theatre by one of our pain specialists.

An experienced anaesthetist may be present and may offer you a mild sedative if appropriate.

You will be positioned lying on your front (face down).

X-rays will be taken of your back. This will allow accurate placement of the needle(s) and reduce the risks of side effects.

Your pain specialist will use local anaesthetic to numb your skin before the procedure begins.

Please tell your pain specialist if you experience pain during the procedure.

Once the needle is in position, local anaesthetic mixed with an anti-inflammatory steroid will be injected.

COMMON SIDE EFFECTS

- A flare up of your pain, for a short time
- Bleeding or bruising at the injection site

AFTER THE PROCEDURE

You will be monitored in the recovery area by nursing staff.

Your pain specialist may assess you before you are discharged from hospital. You may feel drowsy if you have had any sedation, and should not drive for the rest of the day. You should have someone to collect you from the hospital. The following day you may return to your usual activities.

STEROID SIDE EFFECTS

Side effects of steroids can include: hot flushes, nausea, fluid retention, raised blood sugar levels and even menstrual irregularities. If you have diabetes, you should monitor your blood sugar carefully for about one week after your epidural.

RARE SIDE EFFECTS

These injections are very safe but it is important that you are aware of any side effects, even if they are rare and do not occur very commonly.

- Nerve damage.
- Allergy, including severe allergic reaction.
- Numbness.
- Infection.
- Paralysis – very rare.
- Injection into a blood vessel causing a toxic reaction – very rare.

Do not cease your regular pain medications; these can be taken with a small sip of water on the morning of your procedure.