

Cortisone Injections

As part of your treatment you have received an injection of cortisone. Cortisone is a naturally occurring anti-inflammatory hormone which exists in the body at all times. Injections may be used to reduce inflammation in tendons, ligaments, and joints, and can sometimes be helpful for short-term pain relief (weeks to months). Some people get long term or permanent relief from a single shot.

The type of cortisone used for musculoskeletal injections works locally, and is less likely to have some of the generalized side effects of oral cortisone. The common side effect of local cortisone injections is temporarily increased pain in the area following the injection. There are very rare side effects of occasional flushing in the face for several hours to a day following the injections, possible depigmentation of the skin in the area of the injection, thinning of the skin, or infection.

You should expect the following things to occur after your injection:

- The area will initially be numb as a result of the Lidocaine or Bupivacaine, which are local anesthetics used to dilute the cortisone.
- After the Lidocaine (lasts 1-2 hours) or Bupivacaine (lasts up to 8 hours) wears off, the area may have increased soreness. The best treatment for this is simply rest, and an ice pack in the evening after the injection. This localized soreness usually will not last more than 24 hours.
- The cortisone injections generally begin working within 3-4 days, and may require 7-10 days for full effect. You should limit significant use of the affected joint (i.e. avoid sports, heavy lifting, etc.) for about 7 days, or per your physician's directions.

Check our website: uhs.berkeley.edu to learn more about this medical concern or others.

For an appointment uhs.berkeley.edu or call **510-642-2000** Clinic Nurse **510-643-7197** for advice