York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Corticosteroid Injection Therapy

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Date:	
Drug injected:	
Local Anaesthetic	Yes/No

ⓘ For more information, please contact:

Musculo Skeletal Service (MSK)

The York and Selby MSK service 01904 725390

Email: yhs-tr.MSKCATTYORK@nhs.net

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Why have an Injection?

A corticosteroid injection is given to reduce pain. The pain relief may be temporary or permanent. People usually do better for longer if they have physiotherapy as well as the injection.

What is in the Injection?

The injection is a corticosteroid. Corticosteroids are drugs used to treat inflammation, which can help to relieve pain.

Your injection may also include local anaesthetic to numb the area being injected. Your injection may also include saline (sterile water) to increase the amount of fluid injected.

How fast does it work?

It can take between two and seven days for the injection to start working.

You should not have the injection if you:

- Have an infection, feel unwell or are taking antibiotics.
- Are allergic to anaesthetic or steroid.
- Due surgery or have had surgery in the last six weeks
- Have had live vaccines within the last four weeks (MMR, polio, yellow fever) or flu/covid-19 jab in the last 14 days.
- Are taking some types of oral antifungal medication (those whose name end in ‘azole’).
- Are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Are under 18
- **Are a type 1 diabetic with high or unstable blood sugars**.
- Do not want the injection.

Please inform us if:

- You have received any corticosteroid injections in the past 12 months.
- If you take other steroids. This might be in tablet form or an inhaler.
- If you take warfarin.
- If you blood thinning medications. These have names such as: Apixaban, Rivaroxaban, Edoxaban, Dabigatran, Warfarin.

What are the side effects?

- Symptom flare (one in 25). This means you could have more pain and or tiredness soon after the injection. This usually settles within two to seven days.
- Facial flushing (one in a 100). These symptoms should settle within four weeks.
- Skin changes – very occasionally some thinning or discoloration of the skin may occur at the injection site with loss of some of the fat tissue under the skin. This is often temporary, and the skin may recover over the course of a year. In some cases, these changes are permanent.
- Menstrual disturbance / breakthrough bleeding - Women may have some changes in their normal cycle after an injection. If it lasts longer than one cycle you should see your doctor.
- Diabetic patients may notice a temporary increase in blood sugar levels. Contact your diabetes specialist for advice if your blood sugar is high.
- Disturbance to INR- if you are on Warfarin you should make arrangements for your INR to be checked 48 to 72 hours after the injection.
- If you take Apixaban, Rivaroxaban, Edoxaban, Dabigatran, we may ask you to stop a dose before the injection. This might, in theory, lead to an increased risk of having a stroke.

What are the risks?

- Infection- there is a very small risk of infection with a recorded rate of one in 40,000. If the area injected becomes red, hot and swollen and you feel unwell please attend the Emergency department of your local hospital with this leaflet.
- Allergic reaction- extremely rare and occurs within 15 minutes of the injection.

Do I need to rest afterwards?

It is recommended to reduce your normal day to day activities if these involve heavy lifting for the upper limb or impact activities for the lower limb. You will be provided with specific advice following your injection.

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:
MSK Service, York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE, telephone 01904 725390 or email yhs-tr.MSKCATTYORK@nhs.net

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net.

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website: www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

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