



SACRO-ILIAC JOINT INJECTION

WHAT IS A SACRO-ILIAC JOINT (SIJ) INJECTION?

Sacro-Iliac Joint Injection is an injection of long lasting steroid ("cortisone") in the Sacro-Iliac joint, performed using a fluoroscope (X-ray camera) with the latest and advanced techniques.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF IT?

The steroid injection is directed to the source of the pain. ("It can be compared to trying to put the fire out from where it starts") The steroid reduces inflammation and swelling of in the Sacro-iliac joint to relief pain, stiffness and other symptoms. The fluoroscope allows pinpointing the pain source safely and effectively. This also allows less use of steroid dose and number of procedures done per patient. By getting to the source of the pain and controlling it, the body is given chance to recover from the pain, avoid drug dependence, disability and improve quality of life. In most cases patients can live with the condition they have and avoid surgery.

HOW LONG DOES THE INJECTION TAKE?

The actual injection takes only a few minutes, but plan to spend 1-1.5 hours at the facility.

WHAT IS ACTUALLY INJECTED? The injection consists of a mixture of local anesthetic

(lidocaine) and the steroid medication (preservative free triamcinolone)

WILL THE INJECTION HURT? The procedure involves inserting a needle through skin and deeper tissues (like a "tetanus shot"). So, there is some discomfort involved. However, we numb the skin and deeper tissues with a local anesthetic using a very thin needle prior to inserting the Epidural needle. We also offer IV sedation.

HOW IS THE INJECTION PERFORMED?

It is done with the patient lying on their belly. We use a fluoroscope which gives x-ray image of the lower back for proper placement of the needle.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AFTER THE INJECTION?

Immediately after the injection, you may feel your legs slightly heavy and/or numb. Also, you may notice that your pain may be gone or quite less. This is due to the local anesthetic injected. This will last only for a few hours. Your pain will return and you may have a "sore back" for a day or two. This is due to the mechanical process of needle insertion as well as initial irritation from the steroid itself. The cortisone starts working in about **1 to 5 days** and its effect can last for several days, months or even years.

WHAT SHOULD I DO AFTER THE PROCEDURE? Make sure to make an appointment to see us in follow up 2-3 weeks after each injection to decide the future course of treatment options. You should have a ride home. Please **DO NOT** plan to drive or perform activities needing coordination right after the procedure. You do not need to stay in bed, you

can walk and do activities as tolerated, but do not resume strenuous physical work even if you feel better.

CAN I GO TO WORK TO WORK THE NEXT DAY? You should be able to return to non physical work, check with the Doctor.

HOW LONG THE EFFECT OF THE MEDICATION LASTS? The immediate effect is usually from the local anesthetic injected. This wears off in a few hours. The cortisone starts working in about 5 to 7 days and its effect can last for several days to a few months.

HOW MANY INJECTIONS DO I NEED TO HAVE? If the first injection does not relieve your symptoms in about a week to two weeks, you may be recommended to have one more injection. If you respond to the injections and still have residual pain, you may be recommended for a third injection.

CAN I HAVE MORE THAN THREE INJECTIONS? In a 12 month period, we generally do not perform more than three injections. This is because the medication injected lasts for about 12 months. If three injections have not helped you much, it is very unlikely that you will get any further benefit from more injections. Also, giving more injections will increase the likelihood of side effects from steroids.

WILL THE SACRO-ILIAC JOINT INJECTION HELP ME? It is very difficult to predict if the injection will indeed help you or not. Generally speaking, the patients who have recent onset of pain may respond much better than the ones with a long standing pain.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND SIDE EFFECTS?

Generally speaking, this procedure is safe. However, with any procedure there are risks, side effects, and possibility of complications. The most common side effect is pain – which is temporary. The other rare risks may include infection, bleeding, spinal puncture with headaches, nerve injury etc. *In over 15 years of practice, Dr. Gopal has performed over 15,000 spinal procedures on patients with no reported serious complication.*

WHO SHOULD NOT HAVE THIS INJECTION?

If you are allergic to any of the medications to be injected, or if you have an active infection or illness going on, you should not have the injection.

CERTAIN MEDICATIONS MAY INCREASE THE RISK OF COMPLICATIONS.

* If you are on Coumadin (warfarin), Heparin, Aggrenox, Lovenox (enoxoparin), Ticlid (ticlopidine), Plavix (clopidogrel), Pradaxa (dabigatran), Eliquis (apixaban), Xaralto (rivaroxaban) OR Other BLOOD THINNING products you will need to get a medical clearance allowing you to stop your medication from your primary physician or cardiologist, prior to your scheduled procedure. **DO NOT STOP TAKING YOUR MEDICATIONS UNTIL WE CALL AND NOTIFY YOU THAT YOU HAVE A MEDICAL CLEARANCE.** You can continue to use Celebrex and your pain medicines before the procedure. You should continue to **TAKE YOUR ROUTINE MEDICATIONS** (high

blood pressure and diabetes medications) before the procedure. If you are on antibiotics please notify us, he may wait to do the procedure. You can resume taking these the next day after the procedure.

REMEMBER:

- **This and all Procedures are performed at New York Advanced Surgical Intervention Care – 2008 Eastchester Road, 2nd level Suite B, Bronx NY 10461**
- **Please do not bring any valuables with you day of procedure as you undergo anesthesia**
- **Please DO NOT stop taking your blood pressure, diabetic, insulin, or cardiac medicines.**
- **Have adult drive or take personalized taxi service to return to your home.**
- **Wear loose, comfortable 2 piece clothing.**
- **If you are diabetic, steroids may temporarily affect your blood sugar, please contact your physician.**
- **Stop taking Coumadin or Plavix (related products) 7 days prior to the scheduled procedure.**
- **Bring any requested MRI, CT, X-ray images on the day of the procedure.**
- **If you are pregnant or possibility that you may be pregnant, let the physician know immediately, as the X-ray camera cannot be used.**
- **When you check in you will need to sign consent forms, advise the medical staff of any allergies, especially to shellfish, iodine, contrast dyes or Latex.**
- **IV sedation; No FOOD for 8 HOURS before the procedure. Clear fluids (Water, Apple Juice) are OK 4-6 hours before the**

procedure. If you are Diabetic and have taken your medicines, please make sure you drink Apple Juice 4-6 hours before your procedure.

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