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## **Introduction**

The clinician who is treating you feels that an injection is an important part of your management. This sheet aims to provide you with information relating to this procedure and answers to questions you may wish to ask. The physiotherapist may discuss with you the need to inject corticosteroids, local anaesthetic or a mix of both.

## **What are Corticosteroids?**

Corticosteroids are essentially very strong anti-inflammatories. They can relieve swelling, stiffness and pain, allowing you to start rehabilitation sooner, have fewer treatment sessions and return to normal activities more quickly. Also, because the injection is placed locally, the effects on your symptoms will not only be stronger but will be quicker than with oral medication.

## **What is Local Anaesthetic?**

This is a type of medication, which can be used to numb an area for a short period of time. The drugs may be used independently to assist the clinician to diagnose particular conditions.

## **How many injections will I need?**

Some conditions require just one whilst others need a series of injections. The clinician giving you the injection will be able to advise you about your individual situation.

## **What should I do after the injection?**

You must rest the injected area for 1-2 days after the injection. This means that you can move it around **but don't over-use it**. In particular, try to avoid the tasks/movements which used to give you pain. This allows the anti-inflammatory action of the drug to do its job and also helps to prevent further injury. If you continue to over-use your joint within this period, it will have an adverse effect and could render the injection less effective.

## **Are there any side effects from this treatment?**

Side effects are very unlikely. Very occasionally patients notice a flare in their joint pain within the first 24 hours after an injection. This usually settles spontaneously over the next couple of days.

- Allergic Reaction - Although extremely rare, an allergy to the medication used in the injection can occur.
- Skin Discolouration - Slight discolouring of the skin around the injection site can occur. It is more common in darker skins.
- Fat Atrophy - This resembles a dip in the skin.
- Menstrual disturbance.
- Facial flushing.
- Acne in those already prone.

Very rarely infection might be introduced into the joint at the time of an injection. If the area becomes more painful and hot then you should consult your doctor immediately.

### **What if I am Diabetic?**

Please note you may have a temporary disturbance to your blood sugar levels after the injection. If you are unsure how to manage this, please ask for advice.

**If you have any further questions relating to the injection, please do not hesitate to ask your clinician or doctor. In the case of an emergency, seek immediate medical advice and have this information available.**

**“This document is available in Welsh / Mae’r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg”**