



ILLUMINA DIAGNOSTICS ULTRASOUND and ULTRASOUND GUIDED STERIOD INJECTION SERVICE

You have recently been referred for an ultrasound scan and an ultrasound guided steroid injection with **Illumina Diagnostics**.

What are steroids? Steroid injections can be a rapid and effective treatment for painful or inflamed joints or tissues. Many steroids occur naturally in the body and some are extremely powerful anti-inflammatories. They are different to steroids body builders use to build muscles. The injection is focussed and should reduce inflammation which, in turn reduces pain.

How quickly will it work? Some injections give relief in hours, others may take a week or more to take effect.

Most injections are quick and easy to perform. An ultrasound scan will be performed to ensure the steroid is injected into the correct area.

Can I drive home after my injection? Most people are fine to drive home after their injection.

What should I do after my injection? If you have an injection into a joint you should avoid strenuous exercise for 1-2 days following and avoid over-using the joint. You should ensure not to excessively work the affected area for a couple of weeks, but you must keep exercising to stop your muscles going weak.





You must tell the sonographer if you:

- Have or have recently had any infections or have latent or healed tuberculosis (TB)
- Have had recent bowel surgery or have an active stomach or duodenal ulcer
- Have had an injection of steroid or local anaesthetic before and you had an allergic reaction.
- Are likely to bleed more as a result of an illness or take medication to thin your blood such as Warfarin or Apixaban.
- Have surgical metalwork at the site of the proposed injection, for example a joint replacement, screws, plates etc.
- Are susceptible to fainting during medical procedures
- Have had any serious mental health disorders or epilepsy
- Have had any kidney, liver or thyroid problems as the dose may need to be adjusted
- Have recently suffered from any form of cancer
- Have thin or brittle bones (osteoporosis)
- Have or recently had myasthenia gravis (a disease which causes weak muscles)
- Have high blood pressure, heart failure or heart conduction
- If you or someone in your family has glaucoma (increased pressure in your eyes)
- Are diabetic - your insulin dose may need to be changed
- Are taking medicines to control HIV (anti-retrovirals) or fungal infections (anti-fungals)
- Are taking oral steroids such as prednisolone

Risks, possible side effects and concerns: These injections have been used for over 50 years and are generally considered very safe. Most people have steroid injections without any unwanted side-effects however, as with all drugs some people will have side-effects. Occasionally people notice a flare-up of their pain within the first 24 hours after an injection. This usually settles by itself within a couple of days, and taking simple painkillers like paracetamol can help.

Very rarely you may get an infection in the joint after an injection. If your joint becomes more painful and hot and if you feel unwell or if you experience progressive warmth, swelling and worsening pain 2 or 3 days after the injection, you should go to A+E immediately and explain that you had an injection in





the joint just before these problems started. Injections can occasionally cause some thinning or changes in the colour of the skin at the injection site; this happens most commonly at the elbow. In very rare cases, an injection of steroids can lead to a small indentation in the skin around the area. Any medication has the potential to cause an allergic reaction, even in someone who has previously encountered the same medication without problem. Serious reactions are extremely rare and are most likely to occur within 20 minutes of the injection. You should therefore remain in the surgery for this time and tell a member of staff if you feel unwell. Other possible side-effects are facial flushing, temporary changes in menstrual periods (postmenopausal women may also experience vaginal bleeding) and changes in mood – you may feel very high or very low. It is possible to see a rise in blood sugar levels from a few days up to a week after the injection if you have diabetes. Very rarely, tendon rupture can occur after a steroid is injected near or into a tendon that has seriously degenerated. Very rarely, nerve or blood vessel damage can occur due to a needle injury. The risk of this is reduced by using ultrasound to guide the injection. Ultrasound scans aren't harmful at diagnostics levels and do not include any radiation.

Contact us for more information

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