

Having steroid injection therapy for foot pain

Department of Podiatric Surgery

Information for Patients

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Introduction

Locally injected steroids can be useful in the treatment of pain linked with inflamed (swollen) joints and soft tissue.

Local anaesthetic is also injected into the area that is painful. The area may remain painful at the time and even after the local anaesthetic has worn off. This can be up to 48 hours after the injection.

It may take a few days or even weeks before the true effect of the steroid is felt. A review appointment will usually be given for 6 to 12 weeks after the injection. Improvement to your pain can last for weeks, months or longer. However, some patients have little, if any, benefit from this treatment.

Common conditions treated include:

Inflammation of soft tissue

- Ligament (including plantar fasciitis)
- Nerve irritation (including neuroma/tarsal tunnel syndrome)
- Tendon (tenosynovitis)
- Soft tissue lumps and bumps (including ganglions/bursitis)
- Scar pain/sensitivity

Joint pain

- Localised joint inflammation (synovitis)
- Arthritis (including osteo/rheumatoid/gout/pseudogout)

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

Steroid therapy may not be suitable if you have:

- heart failure
- infection affecting one area (local) or an infection affecting the whole of the body (systemic)
- a viral infection
- active TB within the last 10 years
- if you are pregnant or breastfeeding
- a known overreaction (hypersensitivity) of the immune system to any of the substances that are in the injection
- are currently taking antibiotics
- have had a live vaccine within the last 4 weeks
- have diabetes and your blood sugar levels are not within the recommended range

Frequency of injections

The recommended advice is that you usually need to wait at least 6 weeks between steroid injections. It is also usually recommended that you have no more than 3 injections in the same area in the space of 12 months.

After the injection

It is advisable to rest for 2 to 3 days after the injection. Try not to do any of the previous movements or activities that you know makes the problem worse. After this, a slow return to normal activity is recommended. **You should not drive on the day of your treatment**

Potential side effects

These are very unlikely, but regular and frequent injections may result in the increased chance of the following side effects

- **Pain:** Despite being given local anaesthetic, you may have quite severe pain in the area injected for up to 48 hours afterwards (known as a 'steroid flare'). You may need to take painkillers such as paracetamol during this period.
- **Infection:** As a sterile technique is used, infection occurs rarely. Pain that gets worse 48 hours after the injection (especially if the joint is hot and swollen) may be due to an infection. You should seek medical attention.
- **Ligament tear to the tendon/Plantar Fascia (ligament that connects your heel to the front of your foot):** Repeated injections into the same area may result in some of the surrounding tissues, such as tendons and ligaments, tearing. This causes the joint to become unstable. It could possibly cause deformity of the foot or long term disability.

- **Localised thinning of the fat layer of the skin:** This can occur when the steroid is injected around the fat layer under the skin. It can result in dimpling and reduced protective padding, particularly if injected into the heel or ball of the foot
- **Local joint numbness:** A rare side effect is the arthritic changes in the joint getting worse. This can follow repeated injections into the joint. This may or may not be accompanied by the toe or joint moving away from the normal place (deviation) or deformity of the foot
- **Loss of skin pigment:** Change in colour of the skin may occur at the site of injection. The skin may become very pale. If you do have this, you must apply a high factor sun cream to the area if exposed to the sun, as pale skin may be at greater risk of damage
- **Raised blood sugar levels in patients with diabetes:** Sometimes, localised steroid injections can result in a change of blood sugar levels for around 48 hours
- **Hypersensitivity reaction to the steroid or local anaesthetic:** Overreaction of the immune system to the injection. We will ask you to stay for 15 minutes after the injection to make sure that you are not having a reaction to it
- **Bruising or haematoma (collection of blood causing swelling under the skin):** Sometimes, there may be some local bleeding into the tissues, though this would be more likely in someone taking aspirin or other blood thinning (anticoagulation) drugs. Patients taking warfarin may have their anticoagulation drugs reduced for a short period before the injection to reduce this risk
- **Facial flushing:** This may occur 24 to 48 hours after the injection, but usually settles within 1 to 2 days

Injection information

You have received a steroid injection (corticosteroid injection therapy) to help reduce the swelling and pain in your foot.

Date seen in clinic:

Clinician:

Location:

Patient Name/DoB:

Steroid given:

Dose:

Batch number and expiry date:

Local anaesthetic given:

Dose:

Batch number and expiry date:

Injection site:

Who is responsible for my care?

Your treatment or surgery will be done by a podiatric surgeon. This is a fellow of the faculty of surgery (College of Podiatry). Podiatric surgeons are not registered medical practitioners (medical doctors). They are non-medical specialists in the surgical and non-surgical management of problems of the foot and ankle - bones, tendons and ligaments. They are registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

Titles

The podiatric surgery team may have different professionals involved in your surgery. The common titles are explained below.

Podiatrist:

- has a 3 year degree in podiatric medicine. They will be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- are independent clinicians, qualified to diagnose and treat foot problems
- may specialise in particular areas of work such as, the care of the diabetic patient or sports medicine

Podiatric surgeon:

- is a podiatrist that has trained only in the surgical and non-surgical treatment of the foot
- is not registered with the GMC as they are not medically qualified
- is registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). You can check your professional is registered with the HCPC.

Consultant podiatric surgeon:

- After some years of practice within a Health Service Department of Podiatric surgery, a podiatric surgeon may be appointed as a consultant. That means they are the lead clinician appointed by an NHS Trust to offer a podiatric surgery service.

Are podiatric surgeons the same as orthopaedic surgeons?

Podiatric surgeons are not the same as orthopaedic surgeons but carry out similar foot operations.

Orthopaedic surgeons:

- completed a medicine degree and are doctors
- then went for further training in the management of bone and joint conditions which affect the whole body. Some go on to have specialist training in one area of the body for example the foot and ankle.

For more information please go to: rcpod.org.uk/podiatric-surgery



Contact Details:

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to get in contact with the podiatry team (Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm).

Rutland Memorial Hospital - Main reception: 01572 772000 (option 8 for outpatient appointments)

Melton Mowbray Hospital - Main reception: 01664 854800

Day surgery unit: 01664 854904

Outpatients: 01664 800154

Loughborough Hospital - Main reception: 01509 611600

Day surgery unit: 01509 564406

Outpatients :01509 564355

Hinckley & District Hospital - Main reception: 01455 441800

Day surgery unit: 01455 441845

Outpatient appointments: 01455 441918

Market Harborough Hospital (St Luke's Treatment Centre)

Main reception: 01858 410500

Outpatient appointments: 01858 438135

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

Previous reference:

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