

INSTRUCTIONS TO PATIENTS FOLLOWING OFFICE INJECTIONS

In general, steroid injections are given with a local anesthetic to help control inflammation in bursa, around tendons and ligaments, and in joints. The local anesthetic will usually numb the area for several hours. The steroid injection will become effective in 2-3 days and may last for several weeks to months. However, the effectiveness of steroid injections is not always predictable. Some people get great relief of pain and inflammation, others don't.

Following a steroid injection, you should be protective of that joint or area of the body, particularly for the period of time that the local anesthetic has made the area pain free.

If an injection is being given around a nerve, you may find that the local anesthetic will cause numbness in the area of the nerve distribution. For example, an injection around the inner side of the elbow may cause numbness in the ring and little fingers for the duration of the local anesthetic. This should resolve over a period of several hours.

In some cases, there will be local bleeding from penetration of the needle, and you may experience some pain for 12-24 hours. Rarely, one may experience a "flare reaction" which is a reaction to the steroid itself. This reaction may cause increased local redness and rather severe pain for 12-24 hours. If you experience swelling, redness, heat, or pain at the injection site, ice or a cold pack may be helpful. Use ice 20 minutes at a time, every 1-2 hours. A mild pain tablet, such as Tylenol or Advil, may help as well.