Patient Information

Information about your Hip Injection

Why am I having a hip injection?

There are various reasons why your surgeon may want to do this. The aim of the injection is either to help confirm where the pain is coming from or to help treat the cause of the pain. It is also sometimes necessary to take a sample of fluid from the hip so that it can be analysed. This is called an ‘aspiration’.

Do I need to have a general anaesthetic?

No. It is possible to perform your injection under local anaesthetic. However, depending on the type of injection your Surgeon may recommend that you have some sedation. This will be discussed with you beforehand and you will have the opportunity to discuss this with an anaesthetist. If you would prefer to be sedated then you can discuss this with your surgeon. If you do have sedation, you will require someone to take you home and be with you overnight.

What happens on the day of my injection?

You will be told where to come and what time you need to arrive. In case you have sedation before your injection, you should not eat in the six hours before admission. You should drink clear fluids only (water or tea and coffee with no milk). You should take all your normal medication. Please let us know if you are taking Warfarin or other blood-thinning medication. You should anticipate being in the day case unit or the x-ray department for half a day, although occasionally you may have to wait longer due to unforeseen circumstances. Your surgeon will ask you to sign a consent form and you are free to ask any questions.

What should I bring with me?

We suggest that you bring a dressing gown and some slippers. We also ask that you bring a list of your current medication.

How is the injection done?

You will be taken directly into the operating theatre. If sedation is required, the anaesthetic team will talk you through this. We will ask you to lie flat on your back. The area over the front of the hip is cleaned and local anaesthetic is injected into the skin using a fine needle. Once the skin is numb, another needle is passed into the hip joint using an x-ray machine to confirm the position.
What is injected into the hip joint?

Initially some dye is injected. This shows up on x-ray and confirms the position of the needle. Once the needle is in the correct place a local anaesthetic is injected into the joint. Occasionally a steroid will be added to the local anaesthetic. Your surgeon will be able to tell you which you are having and why. In certain cases, some fluid will be taken from the hip and sent for analysis in the laboratory. Your surgeon will explain if this is done and why it is required.

Is the injection painful?

We make every effort to ensure you are as comfortable as possible but occasionally discomfort is felt. If you have pain at any point, please make the team looking after you aware so that we can give you extra pain relief.

Are there any risks?

Due to the procedure

- There is a small risk (less than 1%) of infection. Occasionally there is some bruising around the site of the injection. Very rarely there is some temporary numbness around the site of the injection or in the leg.

Due to the steroid

- If you are diabetic, you may notice that your blood sugar levels are slightly elevated for a few days.
- If you are female you may notice some disturbance in your menstrual cycle.
- Some people report facial flushing for a few days.

What happens after the injection?

You will be allowed to go home shortly after your injection. If you have sedation, we require that friends or family take you home and stay with you overnight; you will not be able to drive yourself home. The small dressing over the injection site can be removed the following day. You should continue to take your normal painkillers as required. We will ask you to make a note of whether or not your usual pain goes away and, if so, how long the pain relief lasted. You will usually be given an appointment to be seen in clinic a few weeks following your injection to discuss the result of the injection and the next stage of management.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to ask a member of staff or contact your consultant’s secretary.