



Nigel Donnachie

Consultant Hip & Knee Surgeon

KNEE JOINT INJECTION UNDER LOCAL ANAESTHETIC

The benefits of a knee joint injection

The purpose of administering a knee joint injection is to reduce pain, inflammation and swelling in a painful joint or around a painful area such as a bursa. The aim is to allow you move the knee joint more easily and comfortably. Steroid reduces swelling and inflammation but cannot reverse arthritic wear.

It is important to note that knee joint injections do not work for everyone. Some patients experience many months of symptom relief following a knee joint injection. However, for some patients the results are short term and if this is the case for you Mr Donnachie will discuss ongoing management options.

The risks of a knee joint injection

Adverse reactions and side effects are rare. Some patients experience quite a painful reaction after the injection lasting two to four days, this will normally settle. Other risks include infection, nerve damage, bleeding and bruising.

How is a knee joint injection performed?

A thin needle is inserted into the knee joint or the painful area around the knee joint. Then a combination of local anaesthetic and a low dose steroid are injected. The type of steroid used is a synthetic drug, which acts like a natural hormone (cortisol) produced by your body.

You may have more than one injection. If you have too much fluid in your joint making it feel tight and uncomfortable, Mr Donnachie may draw the fluid out with a syringe before injecting the joint. This is known as a joint aspiration.

After the procedure

As local anaesthetic is combined with the steroid injection, your knee joint may initially feel relatively pain free. However, overuse of your knee joint in the first six hours after the injection may aggravate your symptoms and should therefore be avoided. You may require simple painkillers for the first few days after the injection.



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The full benefits of a knee joint injection may take several days, and in some cases several weeks to be fully apparent. It is useful to keep a record of your progress and the level of symptom relief you have experienced following the injection so that you can discuss this with Mr Donnachie when you are seen for follow-up.

Follow up care

An appointment will be made for you to be seen by Mr Donnachie in the Outpatient's Department.

If you have any problems such as a high temperature/ fever, increasing redness/ swelling around the knee joint or injection site, increasing pain that continues to get worse or increasing difficulty moving the joint, please contact the hospital immediately or alternatively contact your General Practitioner for further advice.

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