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Post-Injection Patient Information Sheet

You have just been given a cortisone injection to reduce pain and inflammation. Cortisone (aka steroid or corticosteroid) injections may be used for diagnostic and/or therapeutic purposes.

We hope the following information will help you understand your treatment and recovery.

What is in a cortisone injection?

- Two local anesthetics (Lidocaine and Marcaine) that numb the area for typically 2-6 hours.
- Triamcinolone acetonide (a type of cortisone), which typically starts to work in the first 7 days but sometimes can take up to two weeks to have a benefit.

Will there be pain after my injection?

- After an injection, the shoulder will initially feel numb because of the local anesthetic. Once this numbing medication wears off, the shoulder may feel sore and swollen. Often, the shoulder feels worse during this period than it did prior to the injection. This is normal and does not necessarily mean that the injection will not help or that it was given in the wrong location. Anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen can be very helpful the evening of the injection while the shoulder is sore and swollen. Ice can also be very helpful during this period. Once the fluid from the injection is absorbed, soreness and swelling will resolve.



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How long will it take for the cortisone injection to work? How long will it last?

- The steroid takes 5-7 days to take effect. It can take up to two weeks to achieve its full effect. If your shoulder does not feel different the day after the injection, please be patient. The steroid is in a crystalline, sustained-release, long-acting form that continues to release for six weeks after the injection. However, many patients experience continued pain relief for much longer because once the inflammation has been halted it may not return.

What are the risks of the injection?

- There is always a very slight risk of infection with breaking the surface of the skin (1/40,000). Other risks may include injury to the blood vessels or nerves, but these are extremely rare.
- If you have diabetes, cortisone can increase your blood glucose levels for up to two weeks. Please monitor your blood sugar closely and if it fails to return to normal, please contact your primary care physician for instructions.
- Should you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the office.

What should I monitor?

- Monitor your shoulder pain closely after the injection. Take note both of pain relief the day of the injection as well as in the days to weeks following an injection. Many patients find it helpful to keep a "journal" of their symptoms surrounding the injection. This will help guide your next visit with Dr. Brusalis.