



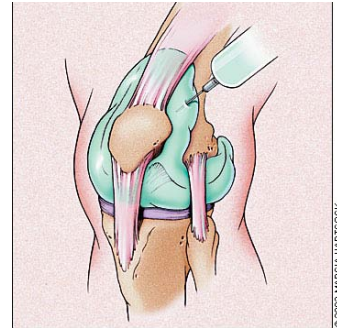
## Patient Education: Knee Joint Aspiration & Injection

### Q: What is knee joint aspiration and injection?

- A:**
- Joint aspiration refers to using a needle to take fluid out of a joint.
  - Only a small amount of joint fluid is taken out to test for problems like infection or gout.
  - Sometimes larger amounts of fluid can be taken to help with short-term pain relief.
  - In some cases the doctor can take out the fluid and then put medicine into the joint to give short-term pain relief. In other cases no fluid is taken out, but medication is put in.

### Q: How is the procedure performed?

- A:**
- The doctor selects the best area to place the needle and the skin over the joint is cleaned with an antiseptic.
  - Sometimes a numbing medicine is injected into the skin, however many patients tell us the injection of the numbing medicine often hurts more than the needle in the joint itself.
  - The needle is inserted carefully into the joint and fluid may be taken out and/or medication is put into the joint. The needle is taken out and the whole procedure usually takes only a few minutes.



### Q: Are there risks with needle aspiration and injection?

- A:**
- Very rarely an infection can develop in the joint.
  - Sometimes the medication injected can inflame the joint. This is called “post injection flare.”
  - Rarely, the needle tip may damage the cartilage surface inside the joint.

### Q: Is the procedure painful?

- A:**
- No. Most people do not find the procedure painful and it is most commonly performed without numbing medicine in the skin.
  - The procedure can hurt a little if the needle touches the joint surface. Your doctor will try to avoid these surfaces, but sometimes this cannot be prevented. If you feel discomfort, it will generally be brief.
  - If you have more pain in the hours/days after injection you need to contact medical.

### Q: If medicine is injected, how long will it work?

- A:**
- The response to medicine injected into the joint varies from person to person.
  - Some people get long lasting results, others may only feel better for a few days to weeks.

### After Joint Aspiration and Injection:

1. A small bandage may be placed over the skin where the needle went in. You can take it off at any time.
2. You may be asked to wear an elastic (ACE®) bandage over the site. The wrap is put on to create support and pressure to help keep the fluid from coming back. Do not wrap the bandage so tight that your leg feels numb or looks blue.
3. If joint fluid was taken out for testing the results should come back in a few days. Your medical team will let you know the results. Please keep any follow-up appointments scheduled with your doctor.
4. Infection in the joint is rare after joint aspiration or injection. If the joint becomes red, warm, or sore, or if you develop a fever in the first few days after the procedure, please contact medical.
5. Both steroid and numbing medicines are normally used when a joint is injected. The numbing medicine inside the joint will often make the pain you were having better for several hours while the steroid will slowly make you feel better.
6. Don't do any heavy exercise or place a lot of strain on the injected joint (For example; carrying heavy objects or jumping up and down) for the first two days after the procedure.
7. Joint pain may return slowly after an injection. Some people receive long-term pain relief, but for most people the pain returns over time. Keep taking any medicine you may have for the joint that your doctor has prescribed.