



PATIENT INFORMATION: CORTISONE INJECTIONS

PURPOSE

Cortisone is a term used to describe a range of Corticosteroid chemicals, which in this case are given by injection. They have a strong anti inflammatory effect. The injections are used for treating inflamed joints (arthritis), but usually in general practice are used for inflamed soft tissues, e.g. where tendons join to the bone. Low doses of steroid are injected right into the area of inflammation to save the side effects, which would be caused by the large doses required to be taken by mouth. A Cortisone injection will often cure or at least give considerable relief to soft tissue injuries.

PROCESS

The skin is swabbed using the aseptic technique, this disinfects the area and reduces the chance of infection. Local anaesthetic is not usually injected under the skin as it hurts just as much as the Cortisone injection, further, the swelling caused by the local injection will disguise the precise direction of the injection. However, local anaesthetic is almost always mixed with the Cortisone to put into the inflamed area to ease the pain following the injection. A very fine needle is inserted into the area and approximately 0.5 to 1ml of fluid is injected. A light dressing is all that is required.

RISKS AND SIDE EFFECTS

Infection is the biggest risk but it is uncommon and special techniques are used to avoid this. Occasionally (in joint injections) a brief flare of arthritis can be triggered. Permanent dimpling of the skin might occur at the injection site.

AFTERCARE

It is important to rest the area as much as possible for the next 2 - 3 days. The area may ache as the local anaesthetic wears off and pain relief is occasionally necessary such as Paracetamol. New redness or pain may indicate infection and should be reassessed by the doctor urgently.

COST

The cost for this procedure is usually \$85.00.